

Select Thoughts :

O R,

CHOICE HELPS

Thomas **FOR** *See Hall*
A Pious Spirit.

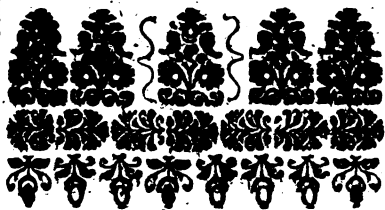
**A Century of Divine
Breathings for a Ravished
Soule, beholding the Excel-
lencies of her Lord *Jesus.***

By J: HALL, B. N.



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TO THE
Christian Reader
Grace and Peace.

I *pleased the Al-
wise and holy
G O D, who or-
ders all events to
his own glory, to make use of
my late Seccession for the
producing of divers, not, I
A 4 hope*

hope unprofitable Tractates ; wherein I much rejoyce that my declined Age , even in that retiredness , might be in any measure serviceable to his Church : Now , I send these Select Notions after their Fellows ; of which , I wish you may finde cause to say with the Wedding-guests at Cana , Thou hast reserved the best wine till now.

The intent of this Labor is to put some good Thoughts (Reader) into thy minde , which would not otherwise , perhaps have tendered themselves

selves to thee ; such , as I hope may not a little further thee on thy journey to Heaven. And if in my Laboring thitherward, I shall, through Gods mercy , be a means of forwarding any soul, but some steps up that steep way, how happy am I ?

To which purpose, I know no means more effectual, then those Meditations which conduce to the animation and vigor of Christian practise : Such I have propounded to my Self, as most behooveful and necessary ; especially for this Age, into

A - 5 which

which we are faln; an Age of more brain then heart; and that bath almost lost Piety in the chase of some litigious Truths. And surely had I known how better to have placed my hours, I should gladly have changed my task: But, I must needs say, I have found this imployment so useful, and proper, as that I have looked upon those Polemical Discourses which have been forced from me, as no better then meer Excursions. I wis, it will be long enough, ere we shall wrangle our selves into Heaven:

Heaven: It must be true contrition, pure consciences, holy affections, heavenly dispositions, hearty devotions, sound Regeneration, Faith working by Love, an humble walking with G O D that shall help us thither; and whatsoever may tend to the advancing of any of these gracious Works in us, is worthy to be dear and precious.

Such passages, Reader, if thou shalt, according to my hopes, meet with here, bless G O D with me, and improve them to the best advantage.

*vantage of thy Soul: Thus
shall our gain be mutual, and
our account happy in the day
of the Lord Jesus: In
whom farewel.*

From Higham,
neer Norwich.

Febr.7. 1647.

Select



Select Thoughts, One Century.

I.

IF miracles be ceased,
yet marvails will
never cease. There
is no creature in the
world, wherein we may not
see enough to wonder at; for
there is no worm of the earth,
no spire of grass, no leaf, no
twig, wherein we may not see
the footsteps of a Deity: The
best visible Creature is man;
now, what man is he that can
make

make but an hair, or a straw, much less any sensitive creature; so as no less than an infinite power is seen in every object that presents it self to our eyes; if therefore we look onely upon the outsides of these bodily substances, and do not see God in every thing, we are no better then brutish; making use meerly of our sense without the least improvement of our faith, or our reason: Contrary then to the opinion of those men, who hold that a wise man should admire nothing, I say, that a man truly wise and good should admire every thing, or rather that infiniteness of wisdom and omnipotence which shews it self in every visible object: Lord what a
beast

beast am I that I have suffered mine eyes to be taken up with shapes, and colours and quantities, and have not lookt deeper at thee (with awful adoration, and wonder) in every parcel of thy great Creation: Henceforth let me see nothing but thee, and look at all visible things, but as the meer shadows of a glorious omnipotence.

II.

Our affections are then onely safe and right, when they are deduced from God, and have their rise from Heaven; then onely can I take comfort of my love, when I can love my wife, my child, my friend, my self, my pleasures, and whatsoever
con-

contentments in God; thus I may be sure not to offend either in the object, or measure; no man can in God love whom he should not, nor immoderately love whom he should: this holy respect doth both direct and limit him; and shuts up his delights in the conscience of a lawful fruition: the like must be said of our joy, and fear, and grief, and what ever other affection; for we cannot derive our joy from God, if we place it upon any sinful thing, or if we exceed in the measure of things allowed; we cannot fetch our fear from Heaven, if it be cowardly, and desperate, nor our grief, if it be meerly worldly and heartless, And if our affections do be-
gin

gin from above, they will surely end there, closing up in that God, who is the Author and orderer of them ; and such as our affections are, such will be the whole disposition of the soul, and the whole carriage of our actions : These are the feet of the soul, and which way the feet walk, the whole man goes ; happy is the man that can be so far the master of himself, as to entertain no affections but such as he takes upon the rebound from Heaven.

III.

Whence is this delicate scent in this Rose, and Violet ? It is not from the root, that smells of nothing ; not from the stalk, that is as senseless as the

the root; not from the earth whence it grows, which contributes no more to these flowers, then to the grass that grows by them; not from the leaf, not from the bud before it be disclosed, which yields no more fragrance then the leaf, or stalk, or root; yet here I now finde it; neither is it here by any miraculous way, but in an ordinary course of nature; for all Violets and Roses of this kinde yield the same redolence; it cannot be, but that it was potentially in that root, and stem from which the flowers proceed; and there placed, and thence drawn by that Almighty power which hath given these admirable vertues to several plants, and educes

educes them in his due seasons
to these excellent perfections.
It is the same hand that works
spiritually in his elect ; out
of the soyl of the renewed
heart, watered with the dew
of Heaven, and warmed with
the beams of his Spirit, God
can, and in his own season,
doth bring forth these sweet
odors of Grace, and holy dis-
positions, which are most
pleasing to himself, and if
those excellencies be so close-
ly lodged in their bosoms,
that they do not discover
themselves at all times, it
should be no more strange to
us, then that this Rose and
Violet are not to be found,
but in their own moneths ;
it is enough that the same
vertue is still in the root,
though

though the flower be van-
ished.

A man that looks at all things through the consideration of eternity, makes no more of a man, than of a flower; that lasts some days, he lasts some years; at their period, both fade: Now, what difference is there to be made betwixt days and years in the thoughts of an eternal duration? Herein therefore I have a great advantage of a carnal heart, such a one bounding his narrow conceits with the present condition, is ready to admire himself, and others, for what they have or are, and is therefore dejected upon every miscarriage: where-

whereas I behold my self, or that man, in all his glory, as vanishing; onely measuring every mans felicity by the hopes and interress which he hath in a blessed eternity.

V.

When I am dead and forgotten, the world will be as it is, the same successions and varieties of seasons, the same revolutions of Heaven, the same changes of Earth and Sea, the like occurrences of natural events, and humane affairs. It is not in my power to alter the course of things, or to prevent what must be. What should I do, but quietly take my part of the present, and humbly leave the care of the future to that all

all-wise providence, which ordereth all things (even the most gross events), according to his most holy and just purposes.

VI.

The Scripture is the Sun, the Church is the Clock, whose hand points us to, and whose sound tells us the hours of the day; the Sun we know to be sure, and regularly constant in his motion; the Clock as it may fall out, may go too fast, or too slow; we are wont to look at, and listen to the Clock to know the time of the day, but where we find the variation sensible, to believe the Sun against the Clock, not the Clock against the Sun. As then, we would
 lie condemn

condemn him of much folly;
that should profess to trust
the Clock rather than the
Sun; so we cannot but justly
tax the incredulity of those
who will rather trust to the
Church than to the Scri-
pture;

What marvellous high re-

spects hath God given to man
above all his other visible
Creatures! what an house
hath he put him into! how
gloriously arched, how richly
pavemented! Wherefore
serves all the furniture of
Heaven and Earth, but for his
use? What delicate provi-
sion hath that bountiful hand
made for his palate, both of
meats and liquors, by Land
and

and Sea : What rich ornaments hath he laid up for him in his wardrobe of earth and waters : and wherefore serves the various musick of Birds, but to please his ear ? For, as for the brute Creatures, all harmony to them is but as silence. Wherefore serves the excellent variety of Flowers, surpassing *Solomon* in all his glory, but to please his eyes : meere grass is more acceptable to Beasts. Yea, what Creature but he is capable to survey Gods wonders in the deep : to contemplate the great fabrick of the Heavens : to observe the glorious bodies, and regular motions of the Sun, Moon, Stars ; and (which exceeds all conceivable mercies,) who but he

he is capable of that celestial Glory, which is within that beautiful contignation? to be a companion of the blessed Angels, yea to be a limb of the mystical Body of the eternal Son of God, and to partake with him of his everlasting and incomprehensible glory? *Lord, what is man that thou art thus mindful of him?* and how utterly unworthy are we even of common mercies, if we return not to our God, more advantage of glory, than those poor creatures that were made for us, and which cannot in nature be sensible of his favors?

VIII.

How plain is it that all sensitive things are ordered by an
B
instinct

instinct from their Maker? He that gives them being, puts into them their several dispositions, inclinations, faculties, operations. If we look to Birds; the Mavis, the Black-bird, the Red-brest have throats tuneable to any note, as we daily see they may be taught strains utterly varying from their natural tones, yet they all naturally have the same songs and accents different from each other, and fully according to their own kinde; so as every Mavis hath the same ditty with his fellows: If we mark the building of their nests, each kinde observes its own fashion and materials, some clay, others moss, hair, sticks; yea if their very motions and restings,

ings, they are conform to their own feather, different from others. If to Beasts, they all untaught observe the fashions of their several kindes. *Galen* observes that when he was dissecting a She-goat big with young, a Kid then ready to be yeaned starts out, and walks up and down the room, and there being in the same place, set several vessels of oyl, hony, water, milk, the new faln Kid smells at them all, and refusing the rest falls to lapping of the milk; whereupon he justly infers, that nature stays not for a Teacher. Neither is it other in Flies, and all sorts of the meanest vermine, all Bees build alike, and order the Common-wealth of their

B 2 hive

hive in one maner ; all Ants keep their own way in their housing, journeys, provisi- ons ; all Spiders do as perfectly and uniformly weave their web, as if they had been Apprentises to the trade, the same instincts are seen also in the rational Creatures, although in most cases overruled by their higher faculties.

What an infinite providence then is this we live under, that hath distributed to every creature, as a several form, so several inclinations, qualities, motions, proper to to their own kinde, and different from other ; and keeps them in this constant uniformity, and variety, for the delight and contentment of man !

man ! O God, that I could be capable of enough wondering at thy great works ! that I could be enough humbled under the sense of my own incapacity, that I could give thee so much more glory, as I finde more vileness in my self.

I X.

When I saw my precious watch (now through an unhappy fall grown irregular) taken asunder, and lying scattered upon the workmans shop-board ; so as here lay a wheel, there the balance, here one gimmer, there another, straight my ignorance was ready to think, when and how will all these ever peece together again in their former

B 3 order ?

order? But when the skilful *Artisan* had taken it a while in hand, and curiously pinned the joynts, it now began to return to its wonted shape, and constant motion, as if it had never been disordered: How could I chuse but see in this, the just embleme of a distempered Church and State? wherein if all seem disjoynted, and every wheel laid aside by it self, so as an unknowing beholder would despair of a redress, yet if it shall please the great *Artist* of Heaven to put his hand unto it, how soon might it return to an happy resettlement? Even so, blessed Lord, for thy great mercies sake make up the breaches of thy *Sion*, & repair the ruines of thy *Jerusalem*

X. We

X

We are, and we are not, all one mans children : Our bodies once met in one root, but our mindes and dispositions do so differ, as if we had never been of kin : one man is so gentle and plausible that he would fain please all ; another is so churlish and dogged that he cares not whom he displeases, and hardly can be well pleased with himself : One so sparing and pinching that he grudges himself necessities, another so vainly lavish, that he cares not how he squanders his estate : one is tenderly pitiful, another mercilessly cruel ; one religiously devout, another wildly profane ; one cowardly fear-

B 4 ful,

ful, another desperately courageous : one jovially cheerful and lightsome, another sad and dumpish, even to stupidity : one petulant and wanton, another austere and continent ; one humble and low-conceited of rich indowments, another swollen big with a little. He did never read men to purpose that is too much troubled with the harsh and unpleasing contrariety of humors, which he meets with in the world ; and he shall be too unthankful to God, that finding himself better composed than others, knows not whither to ascribe it ; and too neglective of himself, that finding his own distempered, labors not to rectify it.

XI Na-

XI.

Nature, Law, and Grace divide all the Ages of the world; now as it is in man (who is a lesser world) that in every day there is a resemblance of his whole life; the morning is his childhood, the mid-day his youth, the evening his old age; so is it in this greater World, the dim break of day was the state of nature, and this was the non-age of the world, wherein the light of knowledg, both of humane and divine things was but weak and obscure. The Sun was risen higher in the state of the Law, but yet not without thick mists and shadows, till the high-noon of that true Sun of Righteousness.

B 5

ness.

ness, who personally shone forth to the world ; upon whose vertical point began the age of Grace, that still continues, which is the clear afternoon, and full vigour of the World, though now in its sensible declination : after this, there shall be no time, but eternity. These then are they, which both the Prophets and Apostles have stiled the last days ; not onely in respect of the times that went before them, but in regard that no time shall follow them : neither have we reason to bogle at the large latitude of sixteen hundred years ; there was neither of the two other periods of age, but were longer then this : Besides, how ever, childhood and

and youth have their fixed terms which they ordinarily pass not, yet the duration of old age is indefinite: We have in our youth known some gray-heads that have continued vigorous, till we have lived to match them in the colour of their livery.

And if this be (as it is) the Evening of the World, do we not see much difference of time in the shutting in of the Light? A Summers Evening, is a Winters day; but if these were to the Apostles the last days, how can they be other then in the last hour, yea, the last minute unto us?

Why do we not put ourselves into a constant expectation of the end of all things, and set our selves in a meet posture

posture for the receipt of our returning Saviour?

XII.

It is a feeling and experimental expression that the Apostle gives of a Christian, That *he looks not on the things which are seen*; not that his eyes are so dim as old *Isaacs*, that he cannot discern them, or that his inward senses are so stupified, that he cannot judg of their true value: but that, taking an exact view of these earthly things, he discovers so much vanity in them, as that he findes them not worthy to be lookt at with the full bent of his desires; like as it is not the meer sight of a strange beauty that is forbidden (for a man may as well

2 Cor. 4.
18.

well look upon a fair face, as upon a good picture) but a settled and fixed aspect, that feeds the eye, and draws the heart to a sinful concupiscence: Thus doth not the Christian look upon the things that are seen, as making them the full scope, and aym of his desires and affections: So far he takes notice of them, as to make his best (that is, lawful and moderate) use of them; not so, as to make them the chief object of his contemplation; the main drift of his cares. It is well observed by S. Basil, that as there are two contrary ways, the broad, and the narrow; so there are two guides, as contrary, *Sense* and *Faith*: *Sense* presents to us the pleasing

sing delights of this world, on the one side; on the other, the present afflictions and persecutions that attend a good profession: *Faith* lays before us the glorious things of a future life, and the endless miseries and torments abiding for sinful souls in the world to come: Now, it is not for every one to deny all credit to his sense, alluring him with all present, and visible pleasures, and discouraging him with the terror & pain of present and visible afflictions, and to yield himself hood-winked, to be led by *Faith*, forepromising onely better things afar off, and foreadmonishing him of dangers, future and invisible. *Faith* onely is that heroicall vertue, which makes a
man

man with an holy contempt to overlook all the pleasing baits of the world, and with a brave courage and fortitude to despise all the menaces, and painful inflictions of his present fury : This works our eyes, not to look upon the things which we cannot but see, the present shews of the world, whether alluring, or terrifying : Had *Lot* but lookt back on *Sodom* ; the pleasant plain of *Sodom*, that lay like the Garden of God behinde his back, he had never escaped into the mountain : Had the glorious *Protomartyr* fixed his eyes onely upon his persecutors, his heart could not but have failed, to see the fire in their faces, the sparkling of their eyes, the grinding of their

their teeth, the bending of their brows, the stopping of their ears, their furious running upon him, their violent halings and draggings; and lastly, a whole volley of stones discharged mortally upon him; he had been utterly daunted with such an impetuosity of death: But he, as not seeing any of this pomp, and ostentation of horror, looks up stedfastly to Heaven, and there sees (that which might well make him blinde to all other visible objects) the Heavens open, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and upon this sight, he shut up his eyes, and slept. The true Christian then, hath with holy *Job*, made a covenant with his eyes, not to look upon

upon, either the cruel insolencies of the raging world with fear and dejectedness; or on the tempting vanities of the world with amorous glances; but with a sober and constant resolution entertains the objects of both kinds. Very justly did *Tertullian* jeer that Heathen Philosopher, who pulled out his eyes to avoyd concupiscence; and can tell him, that a Christian can hold his eyes, and yet behold Beauty unbewitched; and can be at once open-eyed to nature, and blinde to lust: and what the Apostle said of the Use, he can practise of the sight of the world, and earthly objects; he can so behold them, as if he beheld them not. How oft have we, in a deep study fixed
our

Colof. 3.
1, 2.

our eyes upon that, which we, the while thought not upon, neither perceived that we saw? So doth the Christian to these worldly glories, pleasures, profits, whiles his minde and affections are on *the things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*. There, Lord, let me behold those things which cannot yet be seen, but shall, once, in the sight of them make me blessed: And let me not look on the things that are seen; for the things that are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen, are eternal.

XIII.

There is not more strangeness then significance in that charge of the Apostle, That
we

we should put on the Lord Jesus Christ. The soul is (as it were) a body; not really and properly so, according to the gross error of *Tertullian*; but by way of allusion: This body of the soul, then, may not be naked, but must be clad; as our first parents were ashamed of their bodily nakedness, (and so still are all their (not savage) posterity,) so may we of our spiritual. Every sinner is naked; those rags that he hath, are so far from hiding his nakedness, that they are part of it; his fairest moralities are but glittering sins, and his sins are his nakedness: *Aaron* had made *Israel* naked to their shame; not so much in that they were stripped of their earings, as that

Rom. 13.

14.
Gal. 3. 27.

Exod. 32.
25.

that they were enwrapped in the sin of idolatry. No marvel if we run away, and hide us from the presence of God, as our first parents did, whiles we are guilty to our selves of our Spiritual deformity : As then we are bodily naked, when we come into the world, so we are spiritually naked whiles we are of the world ; neither can it be either safe, or comely for us, till we be covered : There is no clothing can fit the soul but the Lord Jesus Christ ; all other robes in the wardrobe of Earth, or Heaven, are too short, too straight ; like those which the scorn of *Hannun* put upon *Dauids* messengers, reaching but to the hams ; for though the soul of man be finite,

finite, the sin of the soul is scarce so; and that sin must be covered, else there can be no safety for the soul, according to that of the *Psalmist*: *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered*: None therefore but the robes of an infinite Righteousness, can cover the soul so wofully dressed; none therefore but the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God blessed for ever, can cover the soul, that it may not appear unrighteous; or can cleanse the soul that it may not be unrighteous; and cleansed it must be, ere the Lord Jesus can be put on: We shall wrong his perfect holiness, if we think we can slip him on, as a case, over our beastly rags: It is with us,

Psal. 32. 1.

Zech. 3. 4.

us, as with *Joshua* the high Priest; The filthy garments must first be taken off, and then the Lord shall say unto us: *Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of rayment.*

We put on a garment when we apply it all over to our body; so as that part which is clothed, appears not, but is defended from the air, and from the eye: if we have truly put on the Lord Jesus, nothing of ours is seen, but Christ is all in all, to us; although this application goes yet deeper; for we so put him on, that we not onely put our selves into him, but also put him into our selves, by a mutual kinde of Spiritual incorporation.

We

We put him on then, upon our Intellectual parts, by knowing him, by believing on him. (*This is eternal life to know thee, and whom thou hast sent*, saith our Saviour;) and for Faith, no grace doth so sensibly apprehend him, and make him so feelingly ours.

We put him on upon our wills, and affections, when we take pleasure in him, when we love him, delight in him, and prefer him to our chiefest joy.

Thus do we put him on; as our Lord, in our humble and dutiful subjection; as our Jesus, in our faithful affiance; as Christ, the anointed of God, to be our King, in all holy obedience; our Priest, in our willing consecration
to

to him ; our Prophet, in our cheerful readiness to be instructed by him : How happy are we, if we be thus decked ; we prank up these poor carcasses of ours gaily, with no small expence ; and when we have done, the stuff, or the fashion, or both, wears out to nothing : But, here is a garment that will never be out of fashion ; *Jesus Christ yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever* ; yea, the same to us : here, we put him on in Grace , there, in eternal Glory.

Deut. 16.

The *Israelites* were forty years in the wilderness , yet their shoes not worn, their apparel not impaired ; but this attire shall not onely hold good in the time of our wandering

dring in this defart, but after we are come into the *Canaan* of glory, and is best at last. Wherefore do we put on our choifest attire on some high days, but to testifie the cheerfulness of our hearts: *Let thy garment be white*, saith the Preacher, *for now God accepteth thy works*: *Mephibosheth* changed not his raiment since *David* went out, as one that would have the sorrow of his heart seen in the neglect of his clothes; although many a one under a gay coat hath an heavy heart, but this attire doth not onely testifie, but make cheerfulness in the soul; *Thou hast given me more joy of heart, then they had in the time that their corn and their wine increased*; and, *In thy presence*

Eccles. 9. 7,
8.

Psal. 4. 7.

C

is

Luk. 16. 19.

Ephes. 6.

is the fulness of joy; what can this apparel of ours do but keep us from a blast, or a showre? it is so far from safeguarding the soul, that it many times wounds it, and that to the death. It was one of the main quarrels against the rich glutton, that he was every day clothed in purple, and byss: How many souls shall once wish that their bodies had been ever either naked, or clad with hair-cloth? But this array, as it is infinitely rich and beautiful, so it is as surely defensative of the soul; and is no less then armor of proof against all assaults, all miseries.

What a deal of cost and pains do we bestow upon these wretched bodies of ours,

ours, onely to make them
 pleasing and lovely to the eye
 of some beholders, as mis-
 erable, perhaps, as our selves;
 and yet when we have all
 done, we are (it may be) no
 better then hard-favord, and
 unhandsome creatures, and
 contemptible in those eyes
 from whom we desired most
 approbation; *Fezebel*, for all
 her licking, is cast out of the
 window, and troden to dirt
 in the streets: But this robe
 we can not wear, and not be
 amiable in the eyes of the
 holiest: *Behold thou art fair,*
my beloved; behold thou art fair,
and there is no spot in thee: Lo,
 in this case, the apparel
 makes the man; neither is it
 in the power of any spiritual
 deformity, to make us other
 C 2 then

Cant. 1. 15.

then lovely, in the sight of our God, whiles we have Christ put on upon us. What ever therefore become of the outward man, let it be my care that my soul be vested with my Lord Jesus; so shall I be sure, to be safe, rich, amiable here, and hereafter glorious.

It was part of our Saviours charge upon the mount, *Take no care what to put on*; but it must be the main care of our lives, how to put on Christ upon our souls: This is the prime stole wherewith the father of the Prodigal, graceth his returned son; the heaven of heavens is not worth such another; when I have once got this on my back, I shall say, though in a contrary sense, with the Spouse in the *Canticles*:

*Canticles: I have put on my coat,
how shall I put it off? I have
washed my feet, how shall I defile
them?*

Cant. 5. 3.

XIIII.

With how devout passion
doth the Psalmist call to all
the works of the Almighty to
praise him; as well supposing,
that every creature (even
those that have no tongues to
speak for themselves) yet
have a tongue to praise their
Maker; *The heavens declare the
glory of God, and the firmament
sheweth his handy work; Day
unto day uttereth speech, and
night unto night sheweth know-
ledg: There is no speech nor
language, where their voice is
not heard; neither is the very
earth defective in this duty:*

Psal. 19. 1.

C 3

Every

Every plant sayes, look on me, and acknowledg, the life, colour, form, smell, fruit, force that I have from the power of my Creator: every worm and flie sayes, look on me, and give God the praise of my living, sense, and motion: every bird sayes; hear me, and praise that God who hath given me these various feathers, and taught me these several notes: every beast, whiles he bellows, bleats, brays, barks, roars, sayes, It is God that hath given me this shape, this sound; yea the very mute fishes, are in their very silence, vocal, in magnifying the infinite wisdom and power of him that made them, and placed them in those watery habitations;

Let

*Let every thing that hath breath
saith the Psalmist, praise the
Lord. Yea the very winds
whistle, and the sea roars out
the praise of the Almighty,
who both raises, and allays
them at pleasure; what a
shame were it for man, to
whom alone God hath given
an understanding heart, a
nimble tongue, and articulate
language, wherein he can ex-
press his rational thoughts, to
be wanting to this so univer-
sal devotion? and to be as in-
sensible of the great works of
God, as the ground that he
treads upon? If others shall
be thus unthankfully dumb,
Yet praise thou the Lord, O my
soul, and all that is within me
bless his holy name; whiles I live
will I praise the Lord; I will sing
C 4 praises*

Psa. ult. ult.

Psal. 103. 1.

2.

Psa. 146. 1,

2.

praises to my God whilst I have any being. But alas Lord thou knowest, I cannot so much as will to praise thee, without thee; do thou fill my heart with holy desires, and my mouth with songs of thanksgiving.

X V.

Luk. 12. 49.

It may seem a strange errand upon which our Saviour tells us he came into the world; *I am come to send fire on the earth*: When the two fervent Disciples would have had fire sent down from Heaven upon but a Samaritan Village, our Saviour rebuked them, and told them they knew not of what spirit they were; yet here, he makes it his own business, to send fire on

on the earth : Alas (may we think) we have fire too much already ; how happy were it rather , if the fire which is kindled in the world , were well quenched ; and what is the main drift of the Prince of darkness but fire ? If not to send fire down from Heaven , upon the inhabitants of the earth ; yet , to send the inhabitants of the earth down to the fire of hell ? As then we finde divers kindes of material fire , Celestial , Elementary , Domestique , Artificial , Natural ; so there is no less variety of spiritual fires : It was in fiery , cloven , tongues , wherein the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles , in their Pentecost ; and even this fire did our Saviour come to send
C 5 down

Acts 2.

Joh. 16. 7.

Jer. 5. 14.

Luk. 23. 32.

Cant. 8. 7.

Psal. 119.
139.

Psal. 39. 4.

Psal. 104. 4.
Heb. 1. 7.

down on the earth : Thy word was in mee as fire, saith the Prophet; and did not our hearts burn within us (saide the two Disciples, in their walk to *Emaus*) whiles he talked with us ; This fire he also came to send: Heavenly Love, and holy Zeal are fire ; *Many waters cannot quench love. My zeal hath consumed me,* saith the Psalmist : and these fires our Saviour came to send into the hearts of men ; holy thoughts are no other then the beams of celestial fire , *My heart was hot within me ; whiles I was musing , the fire burned,* and these, we know he sends : *He maketh his Angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire :* These he sends forth to the earth to minister for

for them that shall be *heirs of of salvation* : Besides these, afflictions and persecutions are fire : We have passed through fire and water : *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery tryal, which is to try you, as if some strange thing had happened to you* : and even these are of his sending ; *The Lord hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof*. There is no evil in the city, but the Lord hath done it : *The Lord hath done that which he had devised, he hath thrown down, and not pitied*.

Heb.1.14.

1 Pet.4.12.

Lament.4.
11.

Lam.2.17.

But this expression of our Saviour goes yet deeper, and alludes to the effect of Separation, which follows upon the fire of our tryal: When the lump of Oar is put into the furnace,

furnace , the fire tryes the pure mettall from the dross, and makes an actual division of the one from the other ; so doth Christ by his Word, and Spirit ; even he that is the Prince and God of Peace, comes to set division in the world. Surely, there are holy quarrels worthy of his engagement ; for, as the flesh lusteth and warreth against the spirit, so the spirit fighteth against the flesh ; and this duel may well beseem God for the Author , and the Son of God for the setter of it : these second blows make an happy fray.

Judges 9.
20.

Nothing is more properly compared then discord to fire; this, Christ (the first thing he does) sets in every heart : there
is

is all quietness, secure ease, and self-contentment in the soul, till Christ come there: How should it be other, when Satan sways all without resistance: but when once Christ offers to enter, there are straight civil wars in the soul betwixt the old man, and the new; and it fares with the heart, as with an house divided in it self, wherein the husband and the wife are at variance; nothing is to be heard, but unquiet janglings, open brawlings, secret opposition; the household takes part, and professes a mutual vexation: This Spiritual self-division, where ever it is, though it be troublesom, yet it is cordial; it puts the soul into the state of *Rebecca's* womb;

womb ; which barren, yielded no pain ; but when an *Esaú* and *Jacob* were conceived, and struggling within, yielded for the time, no ease ; yet this was that which caused her just joy , That she had not so much children , as nations in her womb ; even so the trouble of this inward conflict is abundantly requited with the joy of this assurance , That now Christ is come into our soul , and is working his own desired ends, in; and upon us. Let vain and sensual hearts please themselves in their inward peace and calmness; there cannot be a greater signe of gracelesness and disfavor of God ; When they shall say Peace, Peace, then shall come upon them sudden destruction :

on : The old word was , No safety in War ; here it is contrary, It is this intestine war of the heart , with fire and sword to our corruptions , that must bring us true rest for the present, and hereafter eternal peace and happiness. Now, Lord, since it is thy desire that this fire should be kindled, kindle thou and enflame my heart with a fervent desire, and endeavor that this thy desire may be accomplished in me : Set me at war with my self, that I may be at peace with thee.

XVI.

In all that we have to do with God, he justly requires and expects from us, an awful disposition of heart towards his

Acts 2. 2,
12.

his infiniteness ; hereupon it was that he delivered his Law in thunder, fire, smoke, and all dreadful magnificence ; And when upon the same day, he would send down his Spirit, for the propagation of the Gospel, it was done with an astonishing Majesty ; with a sound from Heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and with the apparition of cloven and fiery tongues : And as it was thus in the descent of the Holy Ghost in the miraculous gifts ; so it is in the sanctifying Graces : Seldom ever doth God by them seize upon the heart, but with a vehement concussion going before : That of *S^t Pauls* conversion, was extraordinary and miraculous ; but in some degree

degree it is thus, in every soul ;
 We are struck down first, and
 are made sensible of our spi-
 ritual blindness, ere our full
 call be accomplished ; as it
 was with *Elijah* in the Mount
 of *Horeb*, There came first
 a strong wind, that tore the
 Rocks, and Mountains, and
 after that, an earth-quake,
 then a fire, before the still
 small voyce ; so it is usually
 in our breasts, ere the comfort-
 able voyce of Gods Spirit
 speak to our hearts, there
 must be some blustrings, and
 flashes of the Law : It is our
 honor, and his favor, that we
 are allowed to love God ; it
 is our duty to fear him : We
 may be too familiar in our
 love, we cannot be too aw-
 ful in our fear.

XVII. All

XVII.

All valuations of these outward things are arbitrary, according to the opinion of their pleasure, or their rarity, or the necessity of their use: Did not mens mindes set a price upon mettals, what were they better then some other entrails of the earth, or one better then other? If by publike law the mint were ordained to be onely supplied by our stanneries, how currantly would they pass for more precious then silver mines? To an Indian, a bracelet of worthless Beads is estimated above his Gold; an hungry *Eſau* values a mess of pottage above his birth-right: In the siege of *Samarina*
an

I. n Affes head was sold for
 ourscore peeces of silver ;
 and a Kab of Doves dung for
 five peeces : We have heard
 that those of *Angola* have
 valued a Dog at the price of
 many slaves. In all these
 earthly commodities , the
 market rises, and falls accord-
 ing to conceit, and occasion ;
 neither is there any intrinse-
 cal, and settled worth in any
 of them ; onely Spiritual
 things , as Vertue and Grace
 are good in themselves ; and
 so carry their infinite value in
 them , that they make their
 owner absolutely rich , and
 happy : When therefore I see
 a rich man hugging his bags,
 and admiring his wealth , I
 look upon that man with pity,
 as knowing the poorness of
 that

2 Kings 6.
 25.

that pelf wherein he placeth his felicity; neither can I behold him with other eyes, then those, wherewith, a discreet *European* sees a savage Indian priding himself in those trifles, which our children have learned to condemn: On the other side when I see a man rich in the endowments of minde, well-fraught with knowledg, eminent in goodness, and truly gracious, I shall rise up to that man (how homely so ever his outside be) as the most precious and excellent peece which this world can afford.

XVIII.

Should I but see an Angel,
I should look (with *Manoah*) to
dye no other death then the
fight

fight of that glory ; and yet
 even that Angel is fain to hide
 his face, as not able to behold
 the infinite Majesty of God
 his Creator: When *Moses*
 did but talk with God in the
 Mount, for forty days, his
 face did so shine, that the
Israelites could not look upon
 the lustre of his countenance,
 even the very presence of the
 Divine Majesty not only
 hath, but communicates glo-
 ry : Lord, that I could see
 but some glimpse of the re-
 flection of those glorious
 beams of thine upon my soul ;
 how happy should I be in this
 vision, whose next degree is
 perfectly beatifical.

XIX.

As good, so evil is apt to
 be

be communicative of it self
and this so much more , as
meets with subjects more
capable of evil then good
the breath of a plague-sick
man taints the air round about
him ; yea, the very sight of
blear eyes infects the sound
and one yawning mouth
stretcheth many jaws : How
many have we known , that
have been innocent in their
retiredness , miserably de-
baucht with leud conversati-
on ? Next to being good, is
to consort with the vertuous.
It is the most merciful im-
provement of an holy power
to separate the precious from
the vile ; it is the highest praise
of a constant goodness , for a
Lot to be righteous in the
midst of *Sodom*.

XX. We

XX.

We are all apt to put off the blame of our miscarriages from our selves: Even in paradise we did so: It was the woman, saith *Adam*, it was the Serpent, saith the woman: How have we heard fond gamesters cast the blame of their ill luck upon the standers by, which intermedled nothing but by a silent eyesight; So the idolatrous *Pagans* of old, though flagitiously wicked; yet could impute their publike judgments to none but the Christians, whose onely innocence was their protection from utter ruine; So foolishly partial doth our self-love render us to our own demerits, that all are guilty

guilty save ourselves : Yea rather than we will want shifts, our very stars shall be blamed; which are no more necessary to our harms, than our eyes are to the Eclipses of their most eminent Lights. As on the contrary, we are ready to arrogate unto ourselves those blessings, which the meer bounty of Divine Providence hath cast upon us; whereto we could not contribute so much as an hand to receive them, but by the mercy of the giver : It cannot be well with me, till I have learned to correct this palpable injustice in both; challenging to my self all my errors, and guilt of sufferings, and yielding to God the praise his own free

free and gracious beneficence.

XXI.

How profitable and beneficial a thing is affliction; especially to some dispositions, more than other : I see some trees that will not thrive, unless their roots be laid bare; unless (besides pruning) their bodies be gashed and sliced; others, that are too luxuriant, except divers of their blossoms be seasonably pulled off, yield nothing : I see too rank corn, if it be not timely eaten down, may yield something to the barn, but little to the granary : I see some full bodies, that can enjoy no health without strong evacuations, blood-lettings, fontanelles,

nels; such is the condition of our spiritual part : It is a rare soul that can be kept in any constant order without these smarting remedies; I confess mine cannot : How wilde had I run, if the rod had not been over me ? Every man can say he thanks God for ease ; for me, I bless God for my troubles.

XXII.

When I consider what an insensible Atome man is, in comparison of the whole body of the Earth ; and what a meer Center-point the Earth is, in comparison of the vast circumference of Heaven ; and what an almost-infinite distance there is betwixt this point of Earth, and that

that large circle of the Firmament ; and therewithal think of the innumerable number, and immense greatness of those heavenly Luminaries : I cannot but apprehend how improbable it is, that those Stars should, at such a distance, distinguish betwixt one man, and another ; betwixt one limb of the same body, and another ; betwixt one spot of Earth, and another ; and in so great a mixture, and confusion of influences, should give any distinct intimation of particular events in nature ; and much more of meer contingencies of arbitrary affairs. As for the Moon, by reason of her vicinity to the Earth, and sensible predominance over

D 2

moy-

moysture ; and for the Sun, the great magazin of Light and Heat, I acknowledg their powerful (but impartial) operations upon this whole globe of Earth and Waters, and every part of it, not without just wonder and astonishment ; the other Stars may have their several vertues and effects, but their marvelous remoteness, and my undiscernable nothingness, may seem to forbid any certain intelligence of their distinct workings upon me : But whether these glorious Lights give, or take any notice of such an imperceptible mite as I ; sure I am, there is great reason I should take notice of them ; of their beauteous lustre, of their wonderful magnitude,

magnitude, of their regular motion; and be transported with admiration of that omnipotent power, wisdom, providence, which created this goodly and mighty host of Heaven, and guides them in their constant march, without the least deviation from their first setting out, to the last moment of their final conflagration. O the narrowness of my wretched heart, that affords not room enough for wonder at that which I cannot but see!

XXIII.

It becomes not us to be niggardly where our Saviour intends bounty: How glad should we be rather to amplify the benefit of the great

D 3 Work

Work of our Redeemer: but surely, I cannot see upon what warrant that favor is grounded, that enlargeth the fruit of Christs redemption, to the Angels: the good needed it not, the evil were not capable of it; onely mankinde was captiv'd, and redemable by that invaluable ransom.

Doubtless those blessed Spirits have their part in the joy and gratulation of the infinite mercy of our deliverance; for if they rejoyce at the conversion of one sinner, what triumph do we think there is in Heaven at the Universal Redemption of all beleevers? The propriety of this favor hath reason to engage us so much the more:
Lord,

Lord, thy mercy is free, and boundless; thou wouldst pass by the lapsed Angels, and leave them in their sin, and their chains; and onely rescue miserable man out of their Hell. O for an heart that might be in some measure answerable to so infinite mercy; and that might be no less captiv'd to thy love, then it is freed by thy Redemption.

XXIII.

Men do commonly wrong themselves with a groundless expectation of good; forepromising to themselves all fair terms in their proceedings, and all happy success in the issue; boding nothing to themselves but what they wish; even the man after

D 4

Gods

Psal. 30 6.

Gods own heart could say ,
*In my prosperity I said, tush, I
shall never be removed* ; where-
in their misreckoning makes
their disappointment so much
the more grievous : Had not
David made such account of
the strength and stability of
his Mountain, it could not
have so much troubled him
to have it levell'd with the
Plain ; on the contrary, the
evils which we look for, fall
so much the less heavily, by
how much we are fore-pre-
pared for their entertainment ;
what ever by accidents I may
meet withal besides , I have
two fixed matches that I must
inevitably incounter with,
Age, and Death ; the one is
attended with many inconve-
niences , the other with much
horror :

horror: let me not flatter my self with hopes of jollity, and ease. My comforts for Heaven shall (I trust) never fail me ; but for the present world, it shall be well for me, if I can without too much difficulty scramble out of the necessary miseries of life ; and without too much sorrow crawl to my grave.

X X V.

Heaven hath many tongues that talk of it, more eyes to behold it, but few hearts that rightly affect it : Ask any Christian (especially) whom ye shall meet with ; he will tell you, thither he shapes his course ; there he hath pitcht his hopes, and would think himself highly

D 5 wrongd

wronged by that man, who should make doubt of either his interest or speed: But, if we shall cast our eyes upon the lives of men, or they reflect their eyes upon their own bosoms, the hypocrisie will too palpably discover it self: for surely, which way so ever the faces look, the hands and feet of the most men move hell-ward: If malice, fraud, cruelty, oppression, injustice, excess, uncleanness, pride, contention, covetousness, lyes, heresies, blasphemies, disobedience be the way thither, wo is me, how many walk in that wide and open road to destruction? but even there where the heart pretends to innocence, let a man strictly examine his own affections, he

he shall finde them so deeply
carried, that he shall be for-
ced to confess his claim to
Heaven is but fashionable :
Ask thy self but this one
question, O man, whatsoever
thou art, ask it seriously ;
Might I this very hour go to
Heaven, am I willing and de-
sirous to make a present
change of this life for a bet-
ter ? and tell me sincerely,
what answer thou receivest
from thine own heart. Thy
judgment cannot but tell thee
that the place is a thousand
times better ; that the condi-
tion would be infinitely ad-
vantageous, to exchange base-
ness for glory, misery for
blessedness, time for eternity,
a living death, for a life im-
mortal : If thou do now sum-
ble,

Phil. 1. 23.

ble, and shuffle, and demur upon the resolution, be convinced of thine own worldliness, and infidelity ; and know , that if thy heart had as much of Heaven as thy tongue, thou couldst not but say with the chosen vessel , *I desire to depart hence , and to be with Christ, which is far better.*

X X V I.

There is no earthly pleasure whereof we shall not soon grow weary ; and be as willing to intermit , as ever we were to entertain it ; and if the use of it continue, the very frequency makes it disregarded ; so as that which at first we esteemed rare and precious , is now looked upon as common and despicable ; and if

if it be such, as that our
impetuous affection is too
much transported with a pre-
sent fruition, we are so much
the more distempered in the
loss: on the contrary, those
painful yokes, which at the
first imposing seemed insup-
portable, grow tolerable by
custom and long acquaint-
ance; so as I know not how
it comes to pass, that time
hath a contrary power, both
to aggravate, and lighten
evils: those pleasures are
only worthy to carry our
hearts, which are measured
by no less than eternity; and
those pains most justly for-
midable which know neither
end, nor remission.

XXVII.

XXVII

The nearer our Saviour drew to his glory, the more humility he expressed: His followers, were first his servants, and he their Master; then his disciples and he their Teacher; soon after they were his friends, and he theirs; straight ways after his resurrection, and entrance into an immortal condition, they were his brethren; *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father.* Lastly, they are incorporated into him, and made partakers of his glory, *That they also may be one with us, faithful, & in them; and thou in me: that they may be made perfect in one; and the glory*

Joh. 13. 16.

Joh. 15. 8.

Joh. 15. 14.

Joh. 20. 17.

Joh. 17. 21,
22, 23.

VIL glory which thou gavest me, I have given them. O Saviour, was this done for the depressing of thy self, or for the exaltation of us; or rather for both? how couldst thou more depress thy self, than thus to match thy self with us poor wretched creatures? how couldst thou more exalt us, than to raise us unto this intimacy with thee the All-glorious, and eternal Son of God? how should we learn of thee to improve our highest advancement to our deepest humility, and so to regard each other, that when we are greatest, we should be least.

XXVIII.

How apt we are to misconstrue the Spirit of God, to our

Psal. 2.

our own disadvantage : whiles the blessed Apostle bids us to work out our *salvation with fear and trembling* ; he doth not bid us to work it out with doubt and distrust : It is the Psalmists charge, that we should serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce in him with trembling ; so as there is a fear without diffidence, and a trembling that may consist with joy ; trembling is an effect of fear, but this fear which we must affect is reverential, not slavish, not distrustful : Indeed, when we look upon our selves, and consider our own frailties and corruptions, and Gods infinite justice, we have too just cause of doubt and dejection, yea (were it not for better helps)

helps) of utter despair; but when we cast up our eyes to the power of him that hath undertaken for us, and the faithfulness of him that hath promised; and the sure mercies of him that hath begun his good work in us, we can fear with confidence, and rejoyce in our trembling: For what are our sins to his mercies, our unworthiness to his infinite merits, our weaknesses to his omnipotence! I will therefore so distrust my self, that I will be stedfastly confident in the God of my salvation; I will so tremble before the glorious Majesty of my God, that I may not abate of the joy of his never-failing mercy.

XXIX.

XXIX.

What a large and open hand hath our God: how infinitely doth his bounty transcend not the practise only, but the admiration of man: We think it well if upon often asking we can receive small favors: if after long delay, we can be gratified with a condescension; and if we have received one mercie, that is a bar to a second; whereas our munificent God gives us not onely what we ask, but what we ask not; and therefore before we ask: yea, it is he that gives us to ask, neither could we so much as crave good things, if he did not put into us those holy desires; yea, he not onely gives us blessings,

blessings, before we ask; but
 he gives us the best things, a
 right to eternal glory, before
 we are at all, yea, before the
 world was; and as he prevents
 us in time, so he exceeds our
 thoughts in measure, giving
 us more than we ask: *Rachel*
 would have a Son; God
 gives her two: *Abraham* sues
 that *Ishmael* may live; God
 gives him to prosper and to
 be the father of many Princes:
 Yet more, he gives us what
 we cannot ask. The dumb
 Demoniac could not sue for
 himself; his very silence was
 vocal, and receives what he
 would, and could not request:
 yea lastly, which is the great
 improvement of his mercy,
 he gives us against our asking;
 our ignorance sues against our
 selves

selves, requiring hurtful things, he will not suffer our hearts and tongues to wrong us; but withholds what we unfitly crave, and gives us what we should, and do not crave; as the fond childe cryes to his father for a knife; he reaches him a spoon that may feed, and not hurt him. O the Ocean of divine bounty, boundless, bottomless; O our wretched unworthiness, if we be either niggardly to our selves in not asking blessings, or unthankful to our God in not acknowledging them!

XXX.

Infidelity and faith look both through the same perspective glass, but at contrary ends;

ids : Infidelity looks rough the wrong end of the glass, and therefore sees those objects which are near, afar off ; and makes great things little ; diminishing the greatest spiritual blessings ; and removing far from us, threatened evils : Faith looks at the right end, and brings the blessings that are far off in time, close to our eye ; and multiplies Gods mercies which in a distance lost their greatness : Thus the Father of the faithful saw his seed possessed of the promised land, when as yet he had no seed, nor was likely to have any ; when the seed which he would have, should not enjoy it till after four hundred years ; thus that good Patri-
ark

ark saw Christs day, and
joyced: Thus our first parent
comforted himself after his
ejection out of paradise, with
the foresight of that blessed
seed of the woman, which
should be exhibited almost
four thousand years after
still, and ever faith is like
self; what use were there of
that grace, if it did not fetch
home to my eye things fu-
ture, and invisible?

That this dissolved body
shall be raised out of the dust,
and enlived with this very
soul wherewith it is now
animated; and both of them
put into a condition eternally
glorious, is as clearly repre-
sented to my soul in this glass,
as if it were already done.
*Faithful is he that hath pro-
mised,*

ished, which will also do

XXXI.

Who can think other than
with scorn of that base and
unworthy conceit which hath
been entertained by some,
that our Saviour lived here on-
ly upon alms? He that
condescended to take upon him-
self the shape of a servant, would
have hated to take upon him-
self the trade of a begger: Service
is a lawful calling; beggery
not so: he that gave life to all
creatures, could take a main-
tenance from them without
asking: he that did command
the fish to bring the tribute
money for himself and his
disciples, and could multiply
few loaves and fishes for the
relief

Luk. 8. 2.

relief of thousands ; could rather raise a sustenance to himself, and his, then beg it. But here was neither need, nor cause ; even ordinary means failed not ; many wealthy followers, who had received cures and miraculous deliverances (besides heavenly doctrine) from him, ministred to him of their substance : neither was this out of charity, but out of duty ; in the charge which he gave to his disciples (when he sent them by payrs to preach abroad) he tells them the laborer is worthy of his wages ; and can we think this rule doth not much more hold concerning himself ? had not himself and his family been furnished with a meet stock raised

ised from hence; what purse
 as it which *Judas* bore? and
 how could he be a thief in
 his office, if his bags were
 empty? He therefore that
 would say, *It is a more blessed*
thing to give, then to receive;
 certainly would not choose
 when it was in his power)
 rather to receive then give:
the earth is the Lords, and the
richness thereof; and he di-
 tributes it as he pleaseth,
 amongst the children of men:
 for me, I hope I shall have
 the grace to be content with
 whatsoever share shall fall to
 my lot; but my prayer shall
 be that I may beg of none but
 God.

XXXII.

What a madness it is in

E

us

us to presume, on our interest in Gods favor, for the securing of our sinfulness from judgment? The Angels were deeper in it then we mortals can even hope to be, in these houses of clay; yet long since are ugly Devils; and they which enjoyed the liberty of the glorious Heavens, are now reserved in everlasting chains of darkness; And if we look down upon earth, what darling had God in the world but *Israel*? This was his first born, his lot, his inheritance; of whom he said, *Here I have a delight to dwell.* And now, where is it? O the woful desolations of that select people! What is it to tell of the suffocation of her

er vineyards ? vastation of
 er tents ? the devouring of
 er land ? demolition of
 walls ? breaking down Al-
 ars ? burning of Cities ?
 poyling of houses ? dashing
 in peices their children ,
 ravishing their wives , killing
 of their Priests, eating of their
 own children of but a span
 long, and a thousand such
 woful symptomes of war :
 the Psalmist hath said a word
 for all (in a just, but contrary
 sense) *Destructions are come to*
a perpetual end ; what destru-
 ction can be more , when
 there is no *Israel* ? How is
 that wretched nation vanish-
 ed no man knows whither !
 so as it was *Fezebel's* curse that
 nothing was left , whereof it
 could be said , this was
 E. 2 *Fezebel,*

Psa. 80. 13.

Jer. 4. 20.

Esa. 1. 7.

Psa. 89. 40.

Esa. 27. 11.

Esa. 13. 16.

Psa 78. 84.

Lam. 2. 16.

Jezebel, So there is not one pcece of a man left in all the world, of whom we can say; This was of one of the tribes of Israel : as for those famous Churches, which were, (since that) honored with the preaching, and pens of the blessed Apostles, where are they now to be lookt for, but amongst the rubbish of cursed *Mahumetism* ? O that we could not be high-minded, but fear.

XXXIII.

What a woful conversion is here ? The sting of death is sin ; and the sting of sin is death ; both meet in man, to make him perfectly miserable ; Death could not have stung us ; no, could not have been

been at all, if it had not been for sin : And sin, though in it self extreamly heinous yet were not so dreadful, and horrible, if it were not attended with death : How do we owe our selves to the mercy of a Saviour, that hath freed us from the evil of both ; having pulled out the sting of death which is sin, that it cannot hurt us ; and having taken such order with the sting of sin, which is death, that in stead of hurting, it shall turn beneficial to us : Lord, into what a safe condition hast thou put us ? If neither sin, nor death can hurt us, what should we fear ?

E 3 XXXIV.

XXXIV.

How unjustly hath the presumption of blasphemous cavillers been wont to cast the envy of their condemnation meerly upon the absolute will of an unrespective power, as if the damnation of the creature were onely of a supream will, not of a just merit; the very name of Justice convinces them; a punitive Justice cannot but suppose an offence: It is not for us to rack the brains, and strain the heart-strings of plain honest Christians with the subtilties of distinctions, of a negative, and positive reprobation, of causes and consequences; truths meet for the Schools: It is enough that all Christian Divines; the Synods

V. Synods both of *Dort* and
Trent agree in this truth; that
never man is, was, can be
miserable but for sin, yea, for
his own sin; The Prophet
tells us so in terms, *Why is*
the living man sorrowful, man
suffereth for his sin: Nothing
can be more true than that of
Bildad the Shuhite, Behold,
God will not cast away a perfect
man: thy perdition is of thy
Self, O Israel. It is no less
then rank blasphemy to make
God the author of sin: *Thou*
art the God that hast no pleasure
in wickedness, neither shall any
evil dwell with thee, saith the
Psalmist; our sin is our
own, and the wages of sin is
death; he that doth the work
earns the wages; so then the
righteous God is cleared

Lam. 3. 39.

Job. 8. 20.

Psa. 5. 4.

E 4

both

Ezek 18.
23.

both of our sin, and our death; onely his justice pays us what we will needs deserve; *Have I any pleasure at all (saith he) that the wicked should die, and not that he should return from his ways and live: wherefore return yea and live.* What a wretched thing is a willful sinner that will needs be guilty of his own death: Nothing is more odious amongst men, then for a man to be a felon of himself; besides the forfeiture of his estate, Christian burial is denied him, and he is cast forth into the highway, with a stake pitcht through his body, so as every passenger that sees that woful monument is ready to say: There lyes the carcass, but where is the soul? But

But so much more heinous is the self-felony of a wilful sinner, because it is immediatly acted upon the soul; and carries him with pleasure in the ways of an eternal death. *O Lord, cleanse thou me from my secret faults; keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over me.*

Psal. 19. 12,
13.

XXXV.

We are wont to say, That we ought to give even the Devil his due; and surely, it is possible for us to wrong that malignant spirit, in casting upon him those evils which are not properly his: It is true, that he is the tempter; and both injects

E 5 evil

Jam. 1. 14,
15.

evil motions, and draws them forth into act: but yet, all ill is not immediatly his; we have enough besides, of our own: *Every man*, saith *St. James*, *is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed; then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death; Lo, both the lust, and the seducement are our own; the sin is ours, the death ours: There are indeed diabolical suggestions which are immediatly cast into us by that wicked one; but there are carnal tentations that are raised out of our own corrupt nature; these need not his immediate hand; he was the maine agent in our depravation*

pravation ; but being once depraved we can act evil of our selves : And if Satan be the father of sin , our will is the mother ; and sin is the cursed issue of both : He could not make our sin without our selves ; we concur to our own undoing : It was the charge of the Apostle, That we should not give place to the Devil ; Lo , he could not take it , unless we gave it ; our will betrays us to his tyranny ; in vain shall we cry out of the malice and fraud of wicked spirits , whiles we nourish their complices in our bosomes.

XXXVI.

I cannot but think with what unspeakable joy old
Simeon

Simeon dyed, when, after long waiting for the consolation of *Israel*, he had now seen, the *Lords Christ*; when I hear him say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation*; Me thinks I should see his soul ready to flie out of his mouth in an heavenly ravishment; and even then upon its wing towards its glory; for now his eyes saw, and his arms embraced, in Gods salvation, his own; in *Israels* glory, his own: How gladly doth he now see death, when he hath the Lord of life in his bosome? or how can he wish to close up his eyes with any other object? yet when I have seriously considered

sidered it, I cannot see wherein our condition comes short of his : He saw the childe Jesus but in his swathing-bands, when he was but now entering upon the great work of our redemption ; we see him, after the full accomplishment of it, gloriously triumphing in Heaven : He saw him but buckling on his armor, and entring into the lists ; we see him victorious.

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozra ; this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save ? He could onely say : To us a childe is born, to us a son is given : We can say, Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive,

Esa. 63. 1.

Esa. 9. 6.

Pls. 68. 18.

captive, thou hast received gifts for men : It is true, the difference is, he saw his Saviour with bodily eyes, we with mental ; but the eyes of our Faith are no less sure and unfailing, then those of Sense : Lord, why should not I, whose eyes have no less seen thy salvation, say, Now let thy servant depart, not in peace onely, but in a joyfull sense of my instant glory.

XXXVII.

When I think on my Saviour in his agony, and on his cross, my soul is so clouded with sorrow, as if it would never be clear again : those bloody drops, and those dreadful ejulations (me thinks) should be past all reach

of comfort
his happy
these pangs
a seemingly
into the
; when
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ascending i
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was ever
in those
be passion
aviour, of
ignominio
of all, o
things wit
for my
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of joy

reach of comfort: but when I see his happy elucation out of these pangs, and hear him cheerfully rendring his spirit into the hands of his Father; when I finde him trampling upon his grave, attended with glorious Angels, and ascending in the chariot of a cloud to his Heaven; I am so elevated with joy, as that I seem to have forgotten there was ever any cause of greif in those sufferings. I could be passionate to think, O Saviour, of thy bitter and ignominious death, and most of all, of thy vehement strugglings with thy fathers wrath for my sake, but thy conquest and glory takes me off, and calls me to Hallelujahs of joy and triumph;
Blessing

Revel. 5.
13.

Blessing, honor, glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

XXXVIII.

It is not hard to observe that the more holy any person is, the more he is afflicted with others sin: *Lot* vexed his righteous soul with the unclean conversation of the *Sodomites*; *David's* eyes gush't out rivers of water because men kept not the Law; Those that can look with dry and undisplesed eyes upon anothers sin, never truly mourned for their own: Had they abhorred sin, as sin, the offence of a God would have been grievous to them in whomsoever: It is a godless heart

heart that doth not finde it self
concerned in Gods quarrel ;
and that can laugh at that,
which the God of Heaven
rowns at; my soul is nearest
to me , my sorrow therefore
for my sin must begin at
home, but it may not rest
here; from thence it shall
diffuse it self all the world
over: *Who is offended, and I
burn not ? who offendeth, and
I weep not ?*

2 Cor. 11.
29.

XXXIX.

The world little considers
the good advantage that is
made of sins: surely the whole
Church of God hath reason
to bless God for *Thomas* his
unbelief, not in the act,
which was odious (after so
good assurances) but in the
issue:

issue his doubt proves our evidence ; and his confession (after his touch had convinced him) was more noble, then his incredulity was shameful. All his attendance upon Christ had not taught him so much divinity, as this one touch : Often had he said my Lord, but never my God, till now : Even *Peters* confession (though rewarded with the change of his name) came short of this : The flame that is beaten down by the blast of the bellows, rises higher then otherwise it would ; and the spring water that runs level in the Plain, yet if it fall low, it will therefore rise high ; the shaken tree roots the deeper : Not that we should sin that grace may abound,

God

God forbid; he can never hope to be good that will be therefore ill, that he may be the better: but that our holy cal should labor to improve our miscarriages to our spiritual gain, and the greater glory of that Majesty whom we have offended: To be bettered by grace it is no mastery; but to raise more holiness out of sin, is a noble imitation of that holy God, who brings light out of darkness, life out of death.

X L.

Every man best knows his own complaints, we look upon the outsides of many, whom we think happy; who in the meane time are secretly wrung with the inward sense of

of their own concealed sorrows, and under a smooth and calm countenance smother many a tempest in their bosome. There are those whose faces smile, while their conscience gripes them closely within ; There are those that can dissemble their poverty, and domestick vexations, reserving their sighs till their back be turned ; that can pick their teeth abroad, when they are fasting, and hungry at home : and many a one forces a song when his heart is heavy : No doubt *Naomi* made many a short meal after her return to *Bethlehem*, yet did not whine to her great kinred in a bemoaning of her want : And good *Hannah* bit in many a grief, which her insulting

Sulting rival might not see:
 On the contrary, there are
 many whom we pity as mi-
 rable, that laugh in their
 ease, and applaud them-
 selves in their secret felicity;
 and would be very loath to
 exchange conditions with
 those that commiserate them.
 A ragged Cynick likes him-
 self at least as well as a great
Alexander: The mortified
 Christian that knows both
 worlds, looks with a kinde
 of contented scorn upon the
 proud gallant, that con-
 temns him; as feeling that
 heaven within him, which
 the other is not capable to
 believe.

It is no judging of mens
 real estate by their sem-
 blance; nor valuing others
 worth

worth by our own rate : And for our selves, if we have once laid sure grounds of our own inward contentment and happiness, it matters not greatly if we be mis-known of the world.

X L I.

For one man to give titles to another is ordinary ; but for the great God to give titles to a poor wretched man is no less then wonderful : Thus doth the Lord tell Job ; *There is none like him in the earth , a perfect and upright man* : O what must he needs be , in whom his maker glories ! Lo ; who would have looked for a Saint in so obscure a corner of the east , and in so dark a time , before

before ever the Law gave
right to the world : yet even
then the land of *Uz* yields a
Job ; no time, no place can
be any bar to an infinite mer-
cy : Even this while, for ought
we see, the Sun shined more
bright in *Midian* than in
Mosheh : Gods election will be
sure to finde out his own any
where out of hell ; and if they
could be there, even there al-
so : Amongst all those ido-
trous heathen, *Job* is perfect
and upright ; his religion and
integrity is so much the more
glorious , because it is so ill
neighbor'd ; as some rich
Diamond is set off by a dark
oyle. O the infinite goodness
of the Almighty that picks
out some few grains out of
the large chaff-heap of the
world,

world, which he reserves for the granary of a blessed immortality: It is not of him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy.

We might well imagine that such a sprig must sprout out of the stock of faithful *Abraham*; what other loyns were likely to yield so holy an issue? And if his *Sarah* must be the mother of the promised seed, yet why might he not also raise a blessed seed from *Keturah*? The birth doth not always follow the belly: even this second brood yields an heir of his fathers faith; it is said, That to the sons of the Concubines *Abraham* gave gifts, and sent them away to the East: Surely

Gen. 25. 6.

ch he ne
of a ble
It is ne
, nor in
out of G
Surely this son of the Con-
ubine carries away as rich a
legacy of his fathers grace as
ever was enjoyed by the Son
of the promise at home.

The gifts that *Abraham*
gave to *Midian* were no-
thing to those gifts which
the God of *Abraham* gives
to this son of *Midian*; who
was perfect and upright, one
that feared God and eschewed
evil. I perceive the holy and
wise God meant to make
this man a patern as of pati-
ence, so of all heavenly ver-
ties; he could not be fit for
that use if he were not exqui-
site; and what can be want-
ing to that man, of whom
God holily boasts that he is
perfect?

And now what mettall is so
F fit

fit to challenge the fire of affliction as this pure gold? and who is so fit a match for the great Adversary as this Champion of God? Never had he been put upon so hard a combat, if God had not well known both the strength that he had given him, and the happy success of his conflict: little doth that good man know what wager is laid on his head, but strongly encounters all his tryals: The *Sabeans* have bereft him of his Oxen; the *Chaldees* of his Camels; the fire from Heaven of his sheep; the tempest of his children; Satan of his health; and had not his wife been left to him for his greatest cross, and his friends for his further tormentors, I doubt

doubt whether they had escaped.

Lo there sits the great Potentate of the East, naked and forlorn in the ashes ; as destitute of all comforts, as full of painful boyls and botches ; scraping his loathsome hide with a potsherd ; yet even in that woful posture possessing his soul in patience, maintaining his innocence, justifying his Maker, cheering himself in his Redeemer, and happily triumphing over all his miseries, and at last made the great miroir of divine bounty to all generations : Now must *Job* pray for his freindly persecutors, and is so high in favor with God, that it is made an argument of extream wrath against *Israel* ;

F 2

that

Ezek. 14.
14, 20.

that *though Noah, Daniel, and Job* were in the land they should deliver none but their own souls : O God , this Saint could not have had this strength of invincible patience without thee : thou that rewardest it in him , didst bestow it upon him : it is thy great mercy to crown thine owne works in us : thy gifts are free , thou canst fortifie even my weak soul with the same powers , strengthen me with the same grace , and impose what thou wilt.

XLII.

As it shall be once in glory , so it is in grace , there are degrees of it : The Apostle that said of his auditors , they have received the holy Ghost as
well

well as we, did not say ; they have received the holy Ghost as much as we : We know the Apostles had so much as to give it to others ; none besides them could do so : It is an happy thing to have any quantity of true sanctifying grace at all ; every drop of water is water , and every grain of gold is gold , every measure of grace is precious : But who is there that when he is dry would take up with one drop of liquor when he might have more ? or if covetously minded , would sit down content with one dram of gold ? in such cases a little doth but draw on a desire of more : it is strange to see that in all other commodities we desire a fulness : If God give

F 3

us

us fruit of our bodies, it contents us not to have an imperfect childe, but we wish it may have the full shape and proportion : and, when God hath answered us in that, we do not rest in the integrity of parts, but desire that it may attain to a fulness of understanding, and of stature ; and then lastly to a fulness of age : We would have full dishes, full cups, full cofers, full barns ; a fulness of all things, save the best of all, which is, the holy Ghost. Any measure of spiritual grace contents us ; so as we are ready to say with *Esau* : *I have enough my brother*. There is a sinful kinde of contentation, where-with many fashionable Christians suffer themselves to

to be beguiled, to the utter undoing of their souls : for hereupon they grow utterly careless to get, what they think they have already : who cares to eat that is full crammed ? and by this means they live and die graceless : for had they ever tasted how sweet the Lord is in the Graces of his holy Spirit, they could never think they had enough ; and whiles they do think so, they are utterly incapable of either having, or desiring more : As there is a sinful ; so there is an holy covetousness, which the more it hath, the more it affects : Lord make me thus covetous, and I cannot chuse but be rich

F 4

XLIII.

XLIII.

Exod. 33.
11.

What a marvelous familiarity was this which *Moses* had with God : *That the Lord spake unto Moses, face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend !* and yet more , that *Moses* so spake to God ! what a bold and high request was that which *Moses* made to God : *I beseech thee shew me thy glory,* that is (as it is there interpreted) *thy face !* that face which no man might see and live : Lo ; God had immediately before spoken to *Moses* even to his face , out of the cloudy pillar : that doth not satisfie his holily-ambitious soul : but, as he heard the voyce, so he must see the face of the Almighty : That cloudy pillar

pillar did sufficiently represent unto him the presence of the great God of *Israel* ; yet still he sues for a sight of his glory: This is no pattern for flesh and blood ; far be it from our thoughts to aspire so high : *Thy face, O God, will we seek* : but in thy blessed ordinances, not in thy glorious and incomprehensible essence: It is not for me as yet to presume so far as to desire to see that infinite light which thou art, or that light wherewith thou art cloathed, or that light inaccessible wherein thou dwellest: Onely, now shew me the light of thy countenance in grace, and prepare my soul for that light of glory; when I shall see as I am seen.

XLIV.

In the waters of life, the divine Scriptures, there are shallows, and there are deeps; shallows where the lamb may wade, and deeps where the Elephant may swim: If we be not wise to distinguish, we may easily mis-carry: he that can wade over the foord, cannot swim through the deep; and if he mistake the passage he drowns: What infinite mischief hath arisen to the Church of God from the presumption of ignorant and unlettered men, that have taken upon them to interpret the most obscure Scriptures, and pertinaciously defended their own sense? How contrary is this to all practise in whatsoever

whatsoever vocation? In the Taylors trade, every man can stitch a seam, but every man cannot cut out a garment: In the Saylers art, every one may be able to pull at a cable, but every one cannot guide the helm: In the Physicians profession, every gossip can give some ordinary receipts upon common experience; but to finde the nature of the disease, and to prescribe proper remedies from the just grounds of art, is proper to the professors of that science; and we think it absurd and dangerous to allow every ignorant Mountebank to practise: In matter of law, every plain country-man knows what belongs to distraining, impounding, replevyng;

plevyng : but to give sound counsel to a clyent in a point of difficulty , to draw firm conveyances; to plead effectually, and to give sound judgment in the hardest cases , is for none but Barristers , and Benchers : And shall we think it safe that in Divinity, which is the mistress of all Sciences, and in matters which may concern the eternal safety of the soul, every man should take upon him to shape his own coat, to steer his own way, to give his own dose, to put and adjudg his own case? The old word was, that Artists are worthy to be trusted in their own trade: Wherefore hath God given to men skill in arts and tongues? Wherefore do the aptest wits spend
their

their times and studies from their infancy upon these sacred employments, if men altogether inexpert in all the grounds, both of art and language, can be able to pass as sound a judgment in the depths of Theological truths, as they? How happy were it if we could all learn (according to that word of the Apostle) to keep our selves within our own line : As Christians, the Scriptures are ours ; but to use, to enjoy ; to read, to hear, to learn, to meditate, to practise ; not to interpret according to our private conceit ; for this faculty we must look higher : *The Priests lips are to preserve knowledge : and they shall seek the Law at his mouth : for he is the messenger*

Mal. 2. 7.

*messenger of the Lord of
hosts.*

X L V.

When we see the year in his prime and pride, decked with beautiful blossoms, and all goodly varieties of flowers, cheered with the Musick of birds, and stated in a sweet and moderate temper of heat and cold; how glad we are that we have made so good an exchange for an hard and chilling winter; and how ready we could be to wish that this pleasant and happy season might last all the year long. But herein (were our desires satisfied) we should wish to our own great disadvantage: for if the spring were not followed with an intension of Summers heat, those fruits whose

whose hopes we see in the bud and flower, could never come to any perfection: and even that succeeding fervor, if it should continue long, would be no less prejudicial to the health and life of all creatures; and if there were not a relaxation of that vigorous heat in Autumn, so as the sap returns back into the root, we could never look to see but one years fruit. And thus also it is spiritually: if our prosperity were not intermixed with vicissitudes of crosses; and if the lively beams of grace were not sometimes interchanged with cold deserts, we should never know what belongs to spiritual life: What should we do then, but be both patient of, and thankful

thankful for our changes ; and make no account of any constancy , till we attain to the Region of rest and blessedness ?

XLVI.

What fools doth the devil make of those men which would fain otherwise be accounted wise ? who would think that men could be so far forsaken of their reason , as to fall down before those stocks and stones which their own hands had carved ; to guide their enterprises by the fond auguries of the flying , or posture, or noyse of fowls ; or the inspection of the entrails of beasts ; to tye the confidence of their succels to certain scrawls , and characters,

characters, which themselves have devised: to read their own or others fortunes in their hands or stars: to suffer themselves mocked with deceitful visions: neither are his spiritual delusions less gross and palpable; wise *Solomon* speaks of the wickedness of folly; and we may no less truly invert it; the folly of wickedness, the fool, saith our Saviour, *builds his house upon the sand*, so as it may be washed away with the next waves; what other doth the foolish worldling, that builds all his hopes upon uncertain riches, momentary pleasures, deceitful favors? *The fool* (saith *Solomon*) *walketh in darkness*; the inner walks in the darkness of

Eccles.7.
25.

Matth.7.
16.

1 Tim 6.
17.

Heb 11.25.
Prov. 31.30.
Eccles.2.
14.
Eccles.10.
15.

of ignorance, through the works of darkness, to the pit of darkness: The fool, saith the Preacher, knows not the way into the city: The worldling may perhaps hit the way through the golden gates of honor; or down to the mines of wealth; or to the flowery garden of pleasure; but the way of true peace he knows not: he no more knows the way to Heaven, then if there were none: *The fool* (saith the Psalmist) *hath said in his heart there is no God*; Did not the wicked man say so, he durst not wilfully sin in the face of so mighty and dreadful an avenger. Lastly, the fool is apt to part with his patrimony for some gay toys: and how ready is the carnal heart to

cal

cast away the Favor of God, the inheritance of Heaven, the salvation of his soul, for these vain earthly trifles? Holy men are wont to pass with the world for Gods fools; (alas! how little do these censurers know to pass a true judgment of wisdom and folly? he that was rapt into the third Heaven, tells us, That *the foolishness of God is wiser then men, and the weakness of God stronger then men*; but this we are sure of, that wicked men are the devils fools; and that *judgments are prepared for scorers, and stripes for the back of fools.*

1 Cor. i.
25.

Pro. 19. 19.

XLVII.

There are some things which are laudable in man,
but

but cannot be incident into God ; as a bashful shamefastness, and holy fear : And there are some dispositions blame-worthy in men , which are yet, in a right sense, holily ascribed unto God , as unchangeableness, and irrepentance : Attributes and qualities receive their limitations according to the meet subjects to which they belong ; with this sure rule, That whatsoever may import an infinite purity and perfection , we have reason to ascribe to our Maker ; whatever may argue infirmitie, misery , corruption, we have reason to take to our selves : Neither is it otherwise in the condition of men : One mans vertue is anothers vice, so boldness in a woman,

woman, bashfulness in an old man, bounty in a poor man, parsimony in the great, are as wholly unbeseeming, as boldness in a Soldier, bashfulness in a childe, bounty in the rich, parsimony in the poor, are justly commendable. It is not enough for us to know what is good in it self, but what is proper for us: else, we may be blemished with that which is anothers honor.

XLVIII.

It is easie to observe that there are five degrees of the digestion of our spiritual food: First it is received into the cell of the ear, and there digested by a careful attention; then it is conveyed into the brain, and there concoct-
ed

ed by due meditation, from thence it is sent down into the heart, and there digested by the affections ; and from thence it is conveyed to the tongue, in conference, and holy confession ; and lastly, it is thence transmitted to the hand, and there receives perfect digestion, in our action and performance : And as the life and health of the body cannot be maintained, except the material food pass through all the degrees of bodily concoction, no more can the soul live and prosper in the want of any of these spiritual degrees of digestion ; And as where the food is perfectly concocted, the body grows fat and vigorous ; so is it with the soul, where the spiritual

spiritual repast is thus kind-
digested : Were there not
illings in all these degrees,
the souls of men would not
be so meager and unthriving
as they are. Some there are
who will not give so much as
room to the word of
truth ; such are willing recu-
sants : others will admit it per-
haps, so far, but there let it
rest ; these are fashionable au-
thors : some others can be
content to let it enter into the
chain, and take up some place
among their thoughts and memo-
ries ; these are speculative pro-
fessors ; some (but fewer)
others let it down into their
hearts, and there entertain it
with secret liking, but hide it
from their bosoms, not daring
to make profession of it to the
world,

world; these are close Nicodemians: Others take it into their mouthes, and busie their tongues in holy chat, yet do nothing; these are formal discourses: But alas, how few are there whose hands speak louder then their tongues, that conscionably hear, meditate, affect, speak, do the word of their Maker, and Redeemer?

XLIX.

Men that are in the same condition speed not always alike: *Barabbas* was a thief, murderer, seditionary, and deserved hanging no less then the two thieves that were crucified with our Saviour, yet he is dismissed, and they executed; And even of these

two

two (as our Saviour said of the two women grinding at the mill) one was taken, the other refused; one went before *Peter* to paradise, the other went before *Judas* into hell: The providence and election of a God may make a difference; we have no reason in the same crime, to presume upon a contrary issue: If that gracious hand shall exempt us from the common judgment of our consorts in evil, we have cause to bless his mercy; but if his just hand shall sweep us away in the company of our wicked confociates, we have reason to thank none but our selves for our sufferings.

L

How sweet a thing is re-

G

venge

venge to us naturally : even the very infant rejoyces to see him beaten that hath angered him ; and is ready with his little hand to give that stroke to the by-stander , which he would have with more force returned to the offender ; and how many have we known in mortal quarrels cheerfully bleeding out their last drop, when they have seen their enemy gasping , and dying before them : This alone shews how much there is remaining in our bosome of the sting of that old Serpent, who was a murderer from the beginning, delighting in death, and enjoying our torment ; whereas , on the contrary, true grace is merciful, ready to forgiye, apt to return good for

for evil, to pray for our persecutors; Nothing doth more clearly evince what spirit we are of, then our disposition in wrongs received: The carnal heart breathes nothing but revenge, and is straight wringing the sword out of the hands of him that hath said, *Vengeance is mine*: The regenerate soul, contrarily, gives place to wrath, and puts on the bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of minde, meekness, long suffering, forbearing, forgiving: and will not be overcome with evil, but overcomes evil with good. We have so much of God, as we can remit injuries; so much of Satan, as we would revenge them,

Col. 3. 13.

Rom. 12.

19.

Deut. 32.

35.

Col. 3. 12.

13.

Rom. 12.

21.

G 2

LI.

L I.

It is worth observing how nature hath taught all living creatures to be their own physitians; The same power that gave them a being hath led them to the means of their own preservation: No *Indian* is so savage, but that he knows the use of his Tobacco and Contra-yerva; yea even the brute creatures are bred with this skill: The Dog when he is stomach-sick can go right to his proper Grass; the Cat to her Nep; the Goat to his Hemlock; the Weasel to Rue; the Hart to Dittany; the sick Lyon can cure himself with an Ape; the Monkey with a Spider; the Bear with an Ant-heap; the Panther

Panther with mans dung ;
 and the Stork is said to have
 taught man the use of the
 glyster ; to what purpose
 should we instance when the
 case is universal? The Toad
 hath recourse to his Plantain-
 leaf ; the Tortois to his Peni-
 royal; & in short, there is none
 but knows his own medicine :
 As for the reasonable crea-
 ture , in all the civilized re-
 gions of the world , we may
 well say now of every nation
 as it was of old said of *Egypt*,
 That it is a countrey of Phy-
 sitions : There is not an hus-
 wife, but hath an Apothe-
 caries shop in her Garden ;
 which affords her those re-
 ceipts , whereby she heals the
 ayls of her complaining
 family. Onely mankinde is
 G 3 mortally

mortally foul-sick, and naturally neither knows, nor seeks, nor cares for remedy. O thou that art the great Physician in Heaven, first cure our insensibleness; make thou us as sick of our sins, as we have made our selves sick by sin, and then speak the word, and we shall be whole.

LII.

Num. 8.

When I consider the precious ornaments of the high Priest, the rich Fabrick and furniture of the Tabernacle, the bountiful gifts which the Princes of the Tribes offered at the dedication of the Altar; I cannot but think what a mass of wealth *Israel* brought with them out of *Egypt*; these treasures grew not in the wilderness

wilderness ; neither did *Jacob* and his sons bring them out of *Canaan* ; they were gathered in their *Goshen* : It was an hard bondage under which *Israel* was held by the latter *Pharaohs* ; yet, as if then, in stead of the furnaces of bricks, they had been laboring in the Silver mines, to their own advantage, they come out laden with precious metalls : What should I say to this ? God said, *Israel* is my first born, and the first born was to have a double portion : What was *Israel* but a type of Gods Church ? now the Church of God may be held down with cruel tyranny ; but in spite of all opposition it will thrive ; And though they have lyen among the pots, yet shall they

G. 4.

Psal. 68. 13.

they be as the wings of a Dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold; And if the Spouse of Christ shall be stripped of her outward ornaments; yet the kings daughter is allglorious within; rich in those heavenly endowments of Grace and holiness, which shall make her dear and lovely in the eyes of her celestial Bride-groom; shortly, the Church may be impaired in her external estate; but if, the while, she gathers so much the more of those better treasures; what hath she lost? Godliness is great gain with contentment; If she have less of the world and more of God, what cause can she have of complaint, or her enemies of insultation?

LIII.

LIII.

He that is a God of Order loves both to set, and keep it ; For the service of his Sanctuary he appointed several offices , and in those offices several degrees ; none of those might enterfer with others : The Levites might not medle with the Preists charge ; nor one degree of Levites with another : The Porters might not thrust in amongst the Singers , though perhaps some of their voyces might be more tuneable ; neither might the Singers change places with the Porters : The sons of *Merari*, that were to carry the boards , bars, and pillars of the Tabernacle, and the Court , might not change

Num.4.29.
23.

G 5 with

Num. 4. 15.

with the sons of *Gershon* for the lighter burthen of the curtains, and hangings; nor those of *Gershon*, for the more holy load of the vessels of the Sanctuary, committed to the

Num. 4. 20.

sons of *Kohath*: Neither might the sons of *Kohath* so much as go in to see the covering of those sacred utensils by *Aaron*, and his sons; upon no less pain than death: So punctual was God in setting every man his proper station; and holding him to it, without either neglect, or change: And why should we think God less curious in his Evangelical Church? It was the charge of him, who next under the Almighty, had the marshalling of the Church of the *Gentiles*; Let every man abide

*abide in the same calling, where-
in he was called :* perhaps there
may be a better head for po-
licy upon Plebeian shoulders
than the Governors: shall that
man leave his rank, and thrust
into the chair of government?
Neither is it other in spiritual
offices; It is no thinking that
the wise and holy God will
be pleased with a wel-meant
confusion : For all our im-
ployments in the service of
the Almighty, we must con-
sult, not with our abilities,
but with our vocation.

1 Cor. 7.
20.

LIIII.

I see too many men willing
to live to no purpose; caring
only to be rid of time on what
terms soever, making it the
only scope of their life to
live,

live ; A disposition that may well besit brute creatures, which are not capable of any other aym save meerly their own preservation : but for men that enjoy the priviledg of reason, for Christians that pretend a title to Religion, too base and unworthy ; where God hath bestowed these higher faculties, he looks for other improvements ; For what a poor thing is it onely to live ? a thing common to us, with the most despised vermin, that breeds on our own corruption : but to live for some more excellent ends, is that which Reason suggests, and Religion perfects : Here then are divers subordinations of ends, whereof one makes way for another,

another, and all for the supreme. We labor and exercise that we may eat, we eat that we may live, and maintain health and strength; we desire health and strength that we may do good to our selves and many; that we may be able to do service to God, King, and Country; and therein, we drive at the testimony of a good conscience, approving to God our holy desires, and endeavors; and in all these, at the glory and salvation of our souls; and lastly, in that, as the highest of all ends, at the glory of our blessed Creator and Redeemer; This is indeed to live: otherwise, we may have a being for a time upon earth, but a life I cannot call it; and when

when we must cease to be, we are necessarily swallowed up with the horror of either not being at all, or of being eternally miserable.

L V.

All our love is moved from some good which we apprehend in the party loved ; carnal love from beauty ; worldly from gain ; spiritual from grace ; divine, from infinite goodness : It must needs be therefore, that when the ground and motive of our love faileth, the affection it self must cease ; those that are enamoured of a beautiful face, finde their passion cooled with a loathsome deformity ; those that are led by the hopes of profit, like wasps, leave

leave buzzing about the gal-
ly-pot, when all the hony is
gone; those that could carry
the rod familiarly in their
hand, run from it when they
see it turnd to a Serpent:
Contrarily, when that which
attracts our love is constant
to it self, and everlasting, the
affection set upon it is perma-
nent, and eternal: If then I
love God for riches, for pre-
ferment, for my own in-
dempnity; when intervening
crosses strip me of the hopes
of all these, I shall be ready
to say, with that distemper-
ed King of Israel: *Behold,*
this evil is of the Lord, What
should I wait on the Lord any
longer? If my respects to my
Saviour be for the loaves, and
fishes; my heart is carried a-
way

2 Kings. 6.
33.

Cant. 8.6.

way with those baskets of fragments : but if I can love God for his goodness sake, this love shall out-last time ; and over-match death.

LVI.

1 Cor. 3.
22.

What a wretched narrowness of heart is this which I finde in my self ; that when I may have all things, I take up with nothing ; and when I may be possessed of an infinite good, I please my self in grasping a little thick clay ? It was a large word that the Apostle said to his Corinthians ; *Whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours.* What, shall we think they were richer then their neighbors ?

ors? or is not this the condition of all those, of whom we can say in the next words, *we are Christs?* There, there comes in all our right to this infinite wealth; of our selves we are beggars; in him, who is Lord of all, we are feoffed in all things; for whiles he saith, *All are yours, and ye are Christs, and Christ is Gods;* he both in effect say, Christ is ours, and in him, God is ours; for this right is mutual: how else should all things be ours, if God were not ours; without whom all is nothing? and how should God the Father be ours, without that Son of his love, who hath said, *All things that the Father hath, are mine; Thou O Father art in me, and I in thee:*

No

Joh. 16. 15.
Joh. 17. 21.
Joh. 14. 6.

No man cometh to the Father, but by me ? If then Christ be mine, all is mine : and if I have so oft received him, and so often renewed my union with him, how is he but mine ? O Saviour, let me feel my self thoroughly possessed of thee, whether the world slide, or sink, I am happy.

LVII.

God will not vouchsafe to allow so much honor to wicked instruments, as to make them the means of removing publike evils : The Magicians of Egypt could have power to bring some plagues upon the Land, but had not the power to take them away ; Certainly, there
needed

needed a greater power to give a being to the frogs, then to call them off; yet this latter they cannot do who prevailed in the first: *Moses* and *Aaron* must be called to fetch off that judgment, which the Sorcerers have brought upon themselves; neither is it otherwise still: Wicked men can draw down those plagues upon a nation, which only the faithful must remove: The sins of the one make work for the others intercession: Do we therefore smart, and groan under heavy calamities? we know to whom we are beholden: *Thus saith the Lord to this people, thus have they loved to wander; they have not refrained their feet, therefore he will now remember*

Jer. 14. 10,
12.

Psal. 106.
23.

remember their iniquity, and visit their sins ; When they fast , I will not hear their cry ; and when they offer burnt offrings and an oblation , I will not accept them ; but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine , and by the pestilence. Do we desire to be freed from the present evils and to escape an utter desolation ? They are Moses and Aaron that must do it. He said that he would destroy them : had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach to turn away his wrath , lest he should destroy them : When our quarrel is with Heaven, it is not our force, or our policy that can save us : Every faithful man is a favorite of the King of glory , and can do more then command Legions :

ns : Then is a people in some good way towards safety, when they have learned to know their friends. Whiles we have good mens prayers to grapple with wicked mens sins, there may be hopes of recovery.

LVIII.

The ayming at a good end can be no just excuse for an unlawful act, or disposition; but if contentment did consist in having much, it were a great temptation to a man to be covetous; since that contentment is the thing wherein the heart of man is wont to place it's chief felicity: neither indeed can there be any possible happiness without it; but the truth is, abundance

dance is no whit guilty so
 much as of ease, much less
 of a full joy: how many have
 we known that have spent
 more pleased and happy
 hours, under an house of
 sticks, and walls of mud, and
 roof of straw, then great Po-
 tentates have done under
 marbles, and cedar? And
 how many, both wise Hea-
 then, and mortified Christi-
 ans have rid their hands of
 their cumbersome store, that
 they might be capable of
 being happy? Other crea-
 tures do naturally neglect that
 which abused reason bids us
 dote upon: If we had no bet-
 ter powers then beasts, or
 fowls, we should not at all
 care for this either white, or
 red earth; and if our graces
 were

which were as great as the least of
case, ~~in~~ Saints, we should look care-
how ~~we~~ fly upon the precious and
that have largest treasures that the earth
and can afford; now our debauch-
er and bad reason, in stead of stir-
rings us up to emulate the best
things, draws us down
to follow the basest of them;
cedar moving us to place our hap-
piness in those things which
certified have neither life, nor true
worth; much less can give
us that which they have not; It
is not for the generous souls
of Christians to look so low,
to place their contentment
in any thing, whether within
their bowels, or upon the face
of this earth; but to raise
their thoughts up to the glo-
rious region of their original,
and rest: looking not at the
things

2 Cor. 4.
18.

things which are seen, *but at the things which are not seen: for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

LIX.

Pfal. 29. 4.

The holy Psalmist knew well what he said when he called the thunder in the clouds, *The voice of the Lord a voice powerful and full of Majesty*: The very Heathen made this the most awful act of their *Jupiter*; which the Spirit of God expresses in a more divine language: *The God of glory thundreth*; upon this dreadful sound it is, that the Psalmist calls to the mighty ones, *to give unto the Lord glory and strength, to give unto the Lord the glory due to his name*:

Pfal. 29. 3.

Pfal. 29. 1.
2.

name: as it were advising the great Commanders of the world, when they hear it thunder, to fall down on their knees, and to lift up their hands, and eyes, to that great God that speaks to them from Heaven: No man needs to bid the stoutest heart to fear, when this terrible sound strikes through his ear; which is able to drive even *Neroes* and *Caligulaes* into bench-holes: But this mighty voyce calls for an improvement of our fear, to the glory of that Almighty power whence it proceeds: Perhaps, the presumption of man will be finding out the natural causes of this fearful uproar in the clouds; but the working by means derogates nothing

H thing

Job. 40. 2.
38. 2.
Exod. 19.

1 Sam. 12.
17, 18.

Joh. 12. 28,
29.

Revel. 10.
3-4.

thing from the God of nature; neither yet are all thunders natural: That whirlwind and thunder, wherein God spake to *Job*; that thunder and lightning wherein God spake to *Moses* and *Israel* in mount *Sinai*; that thunder and rain wherewith God answered the prayer of *Samuel* in wheat-harvest, for *Israels* conviction in the unseasonable suit for their King; that thundering voyce from Heaven that answered the prayer of the Son of God, for the glorifying of his Name; the seven thunders that uttered their voyces to the beloved Disciple in *Pathmos*, had nothing of ordinary nature in them: And how many have we heard, and read of, That for sleight-
ing

ing of this great work of God,
have at once heard his voyce,
and felt his stroke. Shortly,
if any heart can be unmoved
at this mighty voyce of God,
it is stiffer then the rocks in
the wilderness; for, *The voyce
of the Lord shaketh the wilder-
ness, the Lord shaketh the wil-
derness of Kadesh*: For me, I
tremble at the power, whiles
I adore the mercy of that
great God, that speaks so
loud to me: It is my com-
fort that he is my Father, who
approves himself thus omni-
potent; his love is no less in-
finite then his power; let the
terror be to them that know
him angry; let my confidence
overcome my fear: *It is the
Lord, let him do what he will*:
All is not right with me till I

Pl. 29. 8.

H 2

have

have attained to tremble at him while he shineth, and to rejoyce in him whiles he thundreth.

L X.

We talk of mighty warriors that have done great exploits in conquering kingdoms; but the Spirit of God tells us of a greater conquest than all theirs; *Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith; Alas, the conquest of those great Commanders was but poor and partial, of some small spots of the earth; the conquest of a regenerate Christian is universal, of the whole world: Those other conquerors,*

1 Joh. 5. 4.

conquerors, whiles they prevailed abroad, were yet overcome at home: and whiles they were the Lords of nations, were no other then vassals to their own lusts: These begin their victories at home, and enlarge their Triumphs over all their spiritual enemies: The glory of those other victors was laid down with their bodies in the dust; the glory that attends these, is eternal; -What pity it is that the true Christian should not know his own greatness; that he may raise his thoughts accordingly; and bear himself as one that tramples the world under his feet? *For all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;* these he

1 Joh. 2.16.

H 3 hath

hath truly subdued in himself; not so as to bereave them of life, but of rule; if he have left them some kinde of being still in him, yet he hath left them no dominion; and therefore may well stile himself the Lord of the world: Far, far therefore be it from him, that he should so abject, and debase himself, as to be a slave to his vassals: none but holy and high thoughts, and demeanors, may now beseem him; and in these spiritual regards of his inward greatness, and self-conquests, his word must be; either *Cesar*, or nothing.

LXI.

I see so many kindes of phrensies in the world, and
so

so many seemingly wise brains taken with them, that I much doubt whom I may be sure to account free from either the touch, or (at least) the danger of this indisposition; How many opinions do I see raised every day, that argue no less than a meer spiritual madness: such as if they should have been but mentioned seven years ago, would have been questioned out of what Bedlam they had broken loose. And for dispositions; how do we see one so ragingly furious, as if he had newly torn off his chains, and escaped; another so stupidly senseless, that you may thrust pins into him, up to the head, and he startles not at it: One so

H. 4 dump-

dumpishly sad, as if he would freez to death in melancholy, and hated any contentment but in sorrow; another so apishly jocund, as if he cared for no other pastime then to play with feathers: One so superstitiously devout, that he is ready to cringe, and crouch to every stock; another so wildly prophane, that he is ready to spit God in the face: shortly, one so censorious of others, as if he thought all men mad but himself; another so mad, as that he thinks himself and all mad men sober, and well-witted.

In this store and variety of distempers (were I not sure of my own principles) I could easily misdoubt my self; now, settled on firm grounds, I can
pity

pity and bewail the woful distraction of many; and can but send them for recovery to that divine wisdom, who calls to them in the openings of the gates, and uttereth her words, saying; *How long ye silly ones will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning; and fools hate knowledg; turn you at my reproof: O ye simple understand wisdom, and ye fools be ye of an understanding heart: Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates: But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me, love death.*

Prov. 1.22.

Prov. 8.5.

Prov. 8.34, 36.

LXII.

Man, as he consists of a double nature, flesh and spirit, so is he placed in a middle rank.

H. 5.

rank.

rank betwixt an angel, which is spirit, and a beast, which is flesh; partaking of the qualities, and performing the acts of both: he is angelical in his understanding, in his sensual affections, bestial: and to whether of these he most inclineth, and conformeth himself, that part wins more of the other, and gives a denomination to him; so as, he that was before half angel, half beast, if he be drowned in sensuality, hath lost the angel, and is become a beast; if he be wholly taken up with heavenly Meditations, he hath quit the beast, and is improved angelical: It is hard to hold an equal temper; either he must degenerate into a beast, or be advanced

advanced to an angel ; meer reason sufficiently apprehends the difference of the condition : Could a beast be capable of that faculty , he would wish to be a man , rather than a brute , as he is : There is not more difference betwixt a man, and beast , then between an angel and a brutish man ; How must I needs therefore be worse then beast , if, when I may be preferred to that happy honor , I shall rather affect to be a beast , then an angel ? Away then with the bestial delights of the sensual appetite ; let not my soul sink in this mud ; let me be wholly for those intellectual pleasures which are pure and spiritual : and let my ambition be , to come as near

neer to the Angel as this clog of my flesh will permit.

LXIII.

There is great difference in mens dispositions under affliction : Some there are, dead-hearted patients, that grow mopish and stupid, with too deep a sence of their sufferings ; others out of a careless jollity are insensible even of sharp and heavy crosses : We are wont to speak of some, whose enchanted flesh is invulnerable ; this is the state of those hearts, which are so bewitched with worldly pleasures, that they are not to be peirced with any calamity, that may befall them in their estates, children, husbands, wives, friends ;

fo

so as they can say with *Solomons* drunkard, *They have stricken me and I was not sick, they have beaten me but I felt it not*; These are dead flesh, which do no more feel the knife, then if it did not at all enter; for whom some corrosives are necessary to make them capable of smart: This disposition, though it seem to carry a face of Fortitude, and Patience, yet is justly offensive; and not a little injurious both to God, and the soul: To God; whom it endeavors to frustrate of those holy ends which he proposeth to himself in our sufferings; for wherefore doth he afflict us, if he would not have us afflicted? wherefore doth the father whip the

Prov. 23.

35.

the childe, but that he would have him smart; and by smarting bettered? he looks for cries and tears; and the childe that weeps not under the rod is held graceless: To the soul, whom it robs of the benefit of our suffering; for what use can there be of patience where there is no sense of evil? and how can patience have its perfect work, where it is not?

Betwixt both these extremes, if we would have our souls prosper, a mid-disposition must be attained; we must be so sensible of evils, that we be not stupified with them; and so resolute under our crosses, that we may be truly sensible of them: not so brawned under the rod, that
we

we should not feel it ; nor yet so tender that we should over-feel it : not more patient under the stripe, then willing to kiss the hand that inflicts it.

LXIV.

God as he is one, so he loves singleness and simplicity in the inward parts : as therefore he hath been pleased to give us those senses double, whereby we might let in for our selves, as our eyes, and ears; and those limbs double, whereby we might act for our selves, as our hands and feet; so those which he would appropriate to himself, as our hearts for beleeve, and our tongue for confession, he hath given us
single,

Jam. 4. 8.

single ; neither did he ever ordain, or can abide two hearts in a bosome, two tongues in one mouth : It is then the hateful stile, which the Spirit of God gives to an hypocrite ; that he is *double-minded* ; In the language of Gods Spirit, a fool hath no heart, and a dissembler hath an heart, and an heart ; and surely, as a man that hath two heads is a monster in nature, so he that hath two hearts is no less a spiritual monster to God : For the holy and wise God hath made one for one ; One minde, or soul, for one body : And if the regenerate man have two men in one ; the old man, and the new ; yet it is so, as that one is flesh, the other spirit ; the minde then

Rom. 7. 23.

then is not double ; but the law of the mind is opposed to the law of the flesh ; so as here are strivings , in one heart , not the sidings of two : for surely , the God of unity can neither indure multiplication , nor division of hearts , in one brest : If then we have one heart for God , another for Mammon , we may be sure God will not own this latter ; how should he , for he made it not ? Yea , most justly will he disclaim both , since that which he made was but one , his double. And as the wise man hath told us , That God hates nothing which he hath made : so may we truly say , God hateth whatsoever he made not ; since what he made not , is onely evil :
When

Psal. 134.
23, 24.

When I have done my best, I shall have but a weak and a faulty heart ; but, Lord, let it be but a single one : *Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

L X V.

There is a kinde of not-being in sin ; for sin is not an existence of somewhat that is but a deficiency of that rectitude which should be : it is privation, but not without real mischief ; as blindness is but a privation of sight, but a true misery : Now, a privation cannot stand alone ; it must have some subject to lean upon ; there is no blindness

ness but where there is an eye,
no death but where there hath
been a life ; sin therefore sup-
poses a soul, wherein it is,
and an act whereto it clea-
veth : and those acts of sin are
they which the Apostle calls
the *works of darkness* ; So as
there is a kinde of operosity
in sin, in regard whereof sin-
ners are stiled, *The workers of*
iniquity : And surely there are
sins, wherein there is more
oyl and labor, then in the
holiest actions : What pains
and care doth the thief take
in setting his match, in
watching for his prey ? How
doth he spend the darkest and
coldest nights in the executi-
on of his plot ? What fears,
what flights, what hazards,
what shifts are here to a-
voyd

Eph. 5. 12.

Luk. 13.
27.

voyd notice and punishment.

The adulterer says, *The stoln waters are sweet* ; but that sweet is fauced to him with many careful thoughts with many deadly dangers. The superstitious bygot, who is himself besotted with error, how doth he traverse Sea and land to make a Profelyte ? What adventures doth he make, what perils doth he run, what deaths doth he challenge, to mar a soul ?

So as some men take more pains to go to Hell, then some others do, to go to Heaven. O the sottishness of sinners that with a temporary miserie will needs purchase an eternal ! How should we thinke no pains sufficient for the attaining of Heaven, when we

see wretched men toyl so much for damnation ?

LXVI.

With what elegance and force doth the holy Ghost express our Saviours leaving of the world; which he calls his taking home again; or his receiving up ? In the former, implying, That the Son of God was, for the time, sent out of his Fathers house; to these lower regions of his exile, or pilgrimage, and was now re-admitted into those his glorious mansions; in the latter, so intimating his triumphant ascension, that he saileth over his bitter passion: surely, he was to take death on his way; so he told his Disciples, in the walk to

Luk. 9. 51.

Emaus :

Luk. 24. 26.

Enquire : Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory? He must be lifted up to the Cross, ere his Ascension to Heaven; but, as if the thought of death were swallowed up in the blessed issue of his death, here is no mention of ought but his assumption : Lo, death truly swallowed up in victory. Neither is it otherwise proportionally with us : wholly so it cannot be; for, as for him, Death did but taste of him, could not devour him, much less put him over; it could not but yield him whole & entire the third day, without any impairing of his nature; yea, with an happy addition to it, of a glorious immortality : and in that glorified

rified humanity he ascended by his own Power into his Heaven : For us , we must be content that one part of us lie rotting for the time, in the dust, whiles our spiritual part shall by the ministry of Angels be received up to those everlasting habitations : Here is an Assumption therefore, true and happy , though not, as yet , total : And why should I not therefore have my heart taken up with the assured expectation of this receiving up into my glory ? Why do I not look beyond death , at the eternally-blessed condition of this soul of mine ; which in my dissolution is thus crowned with immortality : So doth the Seabeaten Marriner cheer up himself

himself with the sight of that Heaven, which he makes for; So doth the Travailer comfort himself, when after a tempestuous storm he sees the Sun breaking forth in his brightness.

Joh. 11. 23. I am dying; but, O Saviour, *thou art the resurrection and the life; he that beleeveth in thee, though he be dead yet shall he live: Awake, and sing ye that dwel in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead: Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord for they rest from their labors, and their works follow them.*

Esa. 26. 19.

LXVII.

What need I be troubled
that I finde in my self a fear of
Death?

Death? what *Israelite* is not ready to run away at the sight of this *Goliath*? This fear is natural; and so far from being evil, that it was incident into the Son of God, who was heard in that which he feared; Christianity serves not to destroy, but to rectify nature. Grace regulates this passion in us, and corrects the exorbitances of it, never intended to root it out: Let me therefore entertain this fear, but so, as that I may master it; if I cannot avoyd fear, let it be such as may be incident into a faithful man: Whiles my fear apprehends just terror in the face of Death, let my faith lay fast hold on that blessed Saviour, who hath both overcome,
 I and

and sweetened it ; on that blessed estate of glory which accompanies it ; my fear shall end in joy , my death in advantage.

LXVIII.

It is too plain that we are fallen upon the old age of the world ; the last times, and therefore nearest to the dissolution ; and if time it self did not evince it, the disposition and qualities would most evidently do it ; For to what a cold temper of charity are we grown ? what meet-
Ice is in these spiritual veins ? the unnatural and unkindly flushings of self-love abound indeed every where ; but for true Christian love it is come to old *David's* pass, it may be

1 King. 1. 1.

be covered with clothes, but it can get no heat: Besides, what whimsies, and fancies of dotage do we finde the world possessed withal, beyond the examples of all former times? what wilde and mad opinions have been lately broached, which the settled brains of better ages could never have imagined? Unto these, how extreemly cholerick the world is grown, in these later times, there needs no other proof then the effusion of so much blood in this present age, as many preceding centuries of years have been sparing to spill.

What should I speak of the moral distempers of diseases, the confluence whereof hath made this age more wicked-

I 2

ly

ly-miserable then all the former? for, when ever was there so much prophane-ness, atheism, blasphemy, schism, excess, disobedience, oppression, licentiousness, as we now sigh under? Lastly, that which is the common fault of age, loquacity, is a plain evidence of the worlds declinedness: for, was there ever age guilty of so much tongue, and pen as this last? were ever the Presses so cloyed with frivolous work? Every man thinks what he lists, and speaks what he thinks, and writes what he speaks, and prints what he writes; Neither would the world talk so much, did it not make account it cannot talk long. What should we do then,
since

since we know the world truly old, and now going upon his great, and fatal Climacterical, but as discreet men would carry themselves to impotent and decrepit age; bear with the infirmities of it, pity and bewail the distempers, strive against the enormities, and prepare for the dissolution.

LXIX.

There cannot be a stronger motive to awe and obedience, then that which Saint *Peter* enforceth; That God is both a Father and a Judg: The one is a title of Love and Mercy; the other of Justice. What ever God is, he is all that; he is all Love and Mercy; He is all Justice; He is not so a Judg, that he hath

1 Pet. i. 17.

I 3

waved

waved the title and affection of a Father : He is not so a Father that he will remit ought of his infinite justice as a Judg : He is, he will ever be both these in one ; and we must fasten our eyes upon both these at once ; and be accordingly affected unto both : He is a Father, therefore here must be a loving awe ; He is a Judg, and therefore here must be an awful love and obedience. So must we lay hold upon the tender mercies of a Father that we may rejoyce continually ; so must we apprehend the Justice of a righteous Judg, that we do lovingly tremble, Why then should man despair ? God is a father ; All the bowels of mortal and humane

Isa. 49. 15.

man's love, are straight to his :
*Can a woman forget her sucking
 child, that she should not have
 compassion on the son of her
 womb? yea, they may forget ;
 yet will I not forget thee : saith
 the Lord.* That which is the
 title of his personality in di-
 vine relation, is also the title
 of his gracious relation to us,
Father ; neither can he be
 other then he is styled ; And
 contrarily how dare man pre-
 sume, since this Father is a
 Judge : It is for sinful flesh
 and blood to be partial ;
 foolish parents may be apt to
 connive at the sins of their
 own loyns, or bowels, be-
 cause theirs ; either they will
 not see them, or not hate
 them, or not censure them, or
 not punish them : The infinite
 I 4 justice

1 Pet. i. 17.

justice of a God cannot wink at our failings : There is no debt of our sin, but must be paid in our selves, or our surety : If then we call him *Father*, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every mans work ; why do we not pass the time of our sojourning here in fear ?

L X X.

How terrible a motion was that, (which was made by the two Disciples) of commanding fire to come down from Heaven, and consume the inhospitable *Samaritans* ? Me thinks, I could tremble but at the imagination of so dreadful a judgment, as they did not fear to sue for ; Yet if we look to the offence, it was
no

no positive act of indignity offered to Christ ; but the meer not-lodging of his train ; and that , not out of a rude inhumanity, but out of a religious scruple : what could they have said if these *Samaritans* had pursued them with swords, and staves, and stones? Whom shall we hope to finde free from cruelty of revenge, when even the Disciple of Love was thus over-taken? What wonder is it if natural men be transported with furious desires, when so eminent Domesticks, and followers of our Saviour were thus faulty? Surely nature in man is cruel; neither is there any creature under Heaven so bloody to its own kinde: Even Bears and Wolves, and
I 5 Tigers.

Tigers devour not one another; and if any of them fall out in single combats for a prey, here is no publique engaging for blood; neither do they affect to enjoy each others torment; rather entertaining one anothers complaints with pity; Let but a swine cry, the rest of the herd within the noyse, come running in, to see and compassionate his pain; onely man rejoices in the misery of the same flesh and blood with himself, and loves to triumph in his revenge: whiles we are thus affected, we know not of what spirit we are; we may soon learn; we are even of that spirit who was a *man-slayer from the beginning*; as for the good spirit, his just style

Joh 8.44.

style is the preserver of men ;
 and the errand of the son of
 man was, not to destroy mens
 lives, but to save them : and his
 charge to these, and all other
 his disciples ; Be mercifull, as
 your Father also is merciful, and
 how easily may we observe
 that this very disciple (as if in
 way of abundant satisfaction
 for this rash over-sight) calls
 more for love, then all the
 rest of his masters train, tel-
 ling us that God is love, and he
 that dwelleth in love, dwelleth
 in God, and God in him : and,
 Beloved, let us love one ano-
 ther : For love is of God ; and
 every one that loveth is of God,
 and knoweth God : He that
 loveth not, knoweth not God :
 for God is love. Shortly then,
 what would not this holy
 disciple

Job. 7. 20.

Luk. 9. 56.

Luk. 6. 36.

1 Joh. 4. 16.

1 Joh. 4. 7.

1 Joh. 4. 8.

disciple have given to have recalled this fiery motion ? The more mercy and charity is in us , the more we have of God ; the more fury, and revenge ; of Satan.

L X X I.

Much caution must be had in our imitation of the actions of the holiest : cautions, both in respect of the persons, and of the actions : God himself ; yea , God cloathed in flesh, (though the pattern of all perfection) is not for our universal imitation ; the most of their actions are for our wonder, not for our exempling ; and amongst men ; how absurd were it in a Peasant to imitate a King ? or one of the long robe , a Souldier ?

If

If Moses climb up the hill of God, *Sinai*; shall another *Israelite* say, *Moses* goes up, why not I? So he might have paid dear for his presumption: *Moses* was called up, the rest were limited; and if a beast touch the hill, he shall dye. That act may beseem one, which would be very incongruous in another; The dog fawns upon his master, and hath his back stroaked; if the Ass do the like, he is beaten: We are naturally apt to be carried with examples: It is one of the greatest improvements of wisdom to know, whom, in what, and how far we may imitate: The best have their weakneses; there is no copy without a blur: *Be ye followers*

Phil. 3. 17.

1 Cor. 4. 16.

1 Cor. 11. 1.

lowers of me, saith the chosen Vessel ; but how ? Even as I am of Christ : It is safe following him that cannot erer.

LXXII.

God who is simply one, infinitely perfect, absolutely compleat in himself, enjoys himself fully, from all eternity, without any relation to the creature : but knowing our wants, and weaknesses, he hath ordained a society for our well-being, and therefore even in mans innocency, could say, *It is not good for man to be alone* : And why Lord ? why might not man have taken pleasure enough in the beauty and sweetness of his Paradise, in contemplating thine Heaven, in the command

command of thine obsequious creatures, and above all, in the fruition of thy divine presence, in that happy integrity of his nature without any accession of other helps? Surely, thou who knewest well what disposition thou hadst put into him, intendedst to fit him with all meet conveniences: and thou who madest him sociable, before he could have any society; thoughtst fit to stead him with such a society, as might make his life comfortable to him. Wise *Solomon* observes it out of his deep experience, for a *vanity under the Sun*, *That there is one alone, and there is not a second; and that, two are better then one, because they have a good reward for their labor.* In

Eccl.4. 7,
8,9.

Matt. 10. 2,
3, 4,

Luke. 10. 1.

In the Plantation of the Evangelical Church, the Apostles are not reckoned single, but by pairs ; and so doth their Lord send them upon the great errand of his Gospel : And when he seconded that Work by a commission given to his seventy Disciples ; He *sent them two and two before his face, into every City and place, whither he himself would come*. After this, when our Saviour had left the earth, *Paul and Barnabas* go together ; and when they are parted, *Paul and Silas, Barnabas and Mark* are sorted: Single endeavors seldom prosper ; many hands make the work both quick and sure: They can be no friends to the happy estate of a Family or Church,

Church, that labor to cause distractions ; Division makes certain way for ruine.

LXXIII.

Under the Law there was difference, as of Ages, so of Sexes : Circumcision was appropriated to the Male : In the Temple there was the Court of the Jews ; and without that, the Court of the Women ; neither might that Sex go beyond their bounds ; and still it is so in their Jewish Synagogues : But in Christ, there is neither Male, nor Female. As the soul hath no Sex ; so God makes no difference in the acceptance of either : As it is the honor of the one Sex, that Christ the Son of God was a man ;

Luk. 2. 38.

Luk. 8. 2, 3.

man ; so it is the honor of the other Sex, that he was born of a woman : And if the woman be (as she is in nature) the weaker vessel, yet she is no less capable of Grace, then the stronger ; as the thinnest glass may receive as precious liquor, as the best plate : Good *Anna* as well as *Simon*, gave glory to their new-born Saviour, to all *that looked for redemption in Jerusalem* : And afterwards, the holy women were no less zealous attendants of Christ, both in his life and death, then the most forward Disciples ; yea, they followed him, when his domestick followers forsook him ; neither could be parted by either his Cross, or his Grave.

And

man; so it is the law
 her Sex, that he
 a woman: but
 man be (as the
 weaker vessel, yet
 capable of Grace
 stronger; as the
 s may receive as
 or, as the be
 d Anna as well as
 glory to their
 our, to all the
 ption in Femal
 wards, the holy
 no less zealous
 f Christ, both
 d death, then
 d Disciples; y
 ed him, when
 followers
 either could be
 er his Cross;

And they were the first that
 were honored with the no-
 te, and message of their
 avours blessed Resurrecti-
 on, and Ascension; then
 which, what employment
 could be more noble? *The*
Lord gave the word, faith the
psalmist, great was the com-
pany of the Preacheresses; the
word is Feminine: However
therefore in natural, and po-
sitive respects, the Philo-
sopher might have some rea-
son to bless God, that he had
made him a man, and not a
woman; yet in spiritual
which are the best) regards,
there is no inequality; so that it
is the great mercy and good-
ness of our common Creator,
that though he hath made a
difference in the smallest mat-
ters,

Joh. 20.
17.

Psal. 68.
11.

King James
his preface
monitory.

ters, yet he makes none in the greatest ; and that he so in differently peoples Heaven with both Sexes, that, for ought we know, the greatest Saint there, is of the weaker Sex.

LXXIV.

Mark. 14. 31.

There is nothing more easie then for a man to be courageous in a time of safety and to defie those dangers which he neither feels nor sees. Whiles the coast is clear, every man can be ready to say, with *Peter* ; *Though all men, yet not I ; If I should dye with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise* : But when the evil hour cometh, when our enemy appears armed in the lists, ready to encounter us,

is, then to call up our spirits,
and to grapple resolutely
with dangers and death, it is
the praise and proof of a true
Christian valour.

XIV. And this is that which the
apostle calls *standing*; in op-
position to both falling, and
being: Falling, out of faint-
ness, and fleeing for fear. It
shall not be possible for us
to stand, if we shall trust
in our own feet; In, and of
ourselves, the best of us are
but meer cowards; neither
can be able so much as to
look our enemy in the face:
Would we be perfect victors?
We must go out of our selves,
to the God of our strength:
If we have made him ours,
who shall, yea, who can be
against us? *We can do all
things*

Ephes. 6. 13,
14.

Phil. 4. 13.

Phil. 4. 13.

Rom. 13.

14.

Psal. 56. 3.

4.

Psal. 18. 2.

3.

things through him it
 strengthens us : All things
 therefore conquer Death and
 Hell : If we be weaknes,
 is omnipotence ; Put we
 the Lord Jesus Christ by
 lively Faith, what enemy
 come within us , to do
 hurt ? What time I am afraid,
 I will trust in thee, O God
 In thee, O God, have I trust
 I will not fear what (either
 flesh (or spirit) can do unto me
 The Lord is my rock, and
 fortress, and my deliverer ;
 God, my strength, in whom I
 trust, my buckler, and the
 of my salvation ; I will
 upon the Lord, who is worthy
 be praised ; so shall I be safe
 from mine enemies.

LXX

LXXV.

It is disparagement enough that the Apostle casts upon all the visible things of this world, That *the things which are seen are temporary*: Be they never so glorious, yet being transitory, they cannot be worthy of our hearts: Who would care for an house of glass, if never so curiously painted, and gilded? All things that are measured by time, are thus brittle: Bodily substances of what kinde soever, lye open to the eye; and being seen, can be in no other, then a fading condition; even that goodly Fabrick of Heaven, which we see, and admire, must be changed, and in a sort dissolved: How much

2 Cor. 4.
18.

2 Pet. 3. 7.
12,

much more vanishing are all earthly glories ? and by how much shorter their continuance is, so much lower must be their valuation : We account him foolish that will dote too much upon a flower, though never so beautiful ; because we know it can be but a moneths pleasure ; and no care, no art can preserve it from withering ; amongst the rest the Hemerocallis is the least esteemed, because one day ends its beauty : what madness then were it in us to set our hearts upon these perishing contentments which we must soon mutually leave, we them, they us : Eternity is that onely thing which is worthy to take up the thoughts of a wise man ;
that

That being added to evil makes the evil infinitely more intolerable ; and being added to good, makes the good infinitely more desiræable.

O Eternity ! thou bottomless abyſs of miſery to the wicked ; thou indeterminable pitch of joy to the Saints of God ; what ſoul is able to comprehend thee ? what ſtrength of underſtanding is able to conceive of thee ? Be thou ever in my thoughts, ever before mine eyes : Be thou the ſcope of all my actions, of all my endeavors : and in reſpect of thee, let all this viſible world be to mee as nothing : And ſince onely the things *which are not ſeen* by the eye of ſenſe *are eternal* ; Lord, ſharpen thou the eyes

K

of

of my faith that I may see those things invisible, and may in that sight, enjoy thy blessed eternity.

LXXVI.

1 Joh. 3. 21.

What is all the world to us in comparison of the Bird in our bosom, our conscience? In vain shall all the world acquit, and magnify us, if that secretly condemn us; and if that condemn us not, *We have confidence towards God*, and may bid defiance to men and devils: Now that it may not condemn us; it must be both pacified, and purged: pacified in respect of the guilt of sin: purged in respect of the corruption:

For so long as there is guilt in the soul, the clamors of an accusing,

accusing, and condemning conscience can no more be stilled, then the waters of the Sea can stand still in a storm: There is then no pacification without removing the guilt of sin; no removing of guilt without remission; no remission without satisfaction; no satisfaction without a price of infinite value answerable to the infiniteness of the Justice offended: and this is no where to be had, but in the blood of Christ, God, and Man: All created and finite powers are but miserable comforters, Physicians of no value, to this one.

And the same power that pacifieth the conscience from the guilt, must also purge it from the filthiness of sin;

K 2

even

Heb. 9. 14.

Heb. 9. 14.

1 Joh. 1. 7.

Act. 15. 9.

even that blood of the Son of God, who *is made unto us of God, Sanctification and Redemption*: That Faith which brings Christ home to the soul, doth by the efficacy of his blessed Spirit, purifie the heart from *all filthiness both of flesh and spirit* : *Being justified by this faith; we have peace with God* : When once the heart is quieted from the uproars of self-accusation, and cleansed from dead works ; what in this world can so much concern us, as to keep it so ? Which shall be done, if we shall give Christ the possession of our souls, and commit the keys into his onely hands ; so shall nothing be suffered to enter in, that may disturb or defile it ; if we shall settle firm resolutions

resolutions in our breasts,
never to yield to the com-
mission of any known, enor-
mious sin : Failings and slips
there will be in the holiest of
Gods Saints, whiles they
carry their clay about them ;
For these we are allowed to
fetch forth a pardon of
course from that infinite mer-
cy of our God, who hath set
a Fountain open *to the house of*
David, and to the inhabitants
of Ferusalem, for sin, and for
uncleanness ; by the force of
our daily prayers : But if,
through an over-bold securi-
ty, and spiritual negligence,
we shall suffer our selves to be
drawn away into some hei-
nous wickedness, it must cost
warm water to recover us :
Neither can it, in such a case,

Zechar. i 3.
1.

K 3

be

Ecclu. 14. 2.

be safe for us, to suffer our eyes to sleep, or our eye-lids to slumber, till we have made our peace with Heaven: This done, and carefully maintained, what can make us other then happily secure? *Blessed is he whose conscience hath not condemned him, and who is not false from his hope in the Lord.*

LXXVII.

We cannot apprehend Heaven in any notion but of excellency, and glory; that as it is in it self a place of wonderful resplendence, and Majesty; so it is the Palace of the most high God, wherein he exhibites his infinite magnificence; that it is the happy receptacle of all the elect of God;

God; that it is the glorious rendezvous of the blessed Angels; that we have parents, children, husband, wife, brothers, sisters, friends whom we dearly loved, there: For such is the power of love that it can endear any place to us where the party affected, is; much more the best; If it be a loathsome gaol, our affection can make it a delightful bower; yea the very grave cannot keep us off: The women could say of Mary, that she was gone to the grave of Lazarus to weep there: and the zeal of those holy clients of Christ carries them to seek their (as they supposed still dead) Saviour, even in his Tomb: Above all conceivable apprehensions

K 4; then,

Colos. 3. 1.

then, wherein Heaven is endeared to us, there is none comparable to that, which the Apostle enforceth to us, that, there *Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*: If we have an husband, wife, childe, whom we dearly love, pent up in some Tower or Castle afar off, whither we are not allowed to have access; how many longing eyes do we cast thither; how do we please our selves to think, within those walls is he inclosed whom my soul loveth; and who is inclosed in my heart; but if it may be possible to have passage (though with some difficulty and danger) to the place, how gladly do we put our selves upon the adventure? When therefore we hear and certainly know that

that our most dear Saviour is above, in all heavenly glory; and that the Heavens must contain him till his coming again, with what full contentment of heart should we look up thither? How should we break thorow all these secular distractions, and be carried up by our affections (which are the wings of the soul) towards an happy fruition of him? Good old *Jacob*, when he heard that his dearling son was yet alive, in *Egypt*, how doth he gather up his spirits, and takes up a cheerful resolution, *Joseph my son is yet alive, I will go and see him before I dye?* Do we think his heart was any more in *Canaan*, after he heard where his *Joseph* was? And shall we, when we hear,

K 5 and

Gen. 45.
26.

and know, where our dearest Saviour (typified by that good Patriark) is; that he is gone before to provide a place for us in the rich *Goshen* above, shall we be heartless in our desires towards him, and take up with earth? How many poor souls take tedious, costly, perilous voyages to that land (which onely the bodily presence of our Saviour could denominate holy, their own wickedness justly stiles accursed) onely to see the place, where our dear Saviour trod; where he stood, where he sate, lay, set his last footing; and finde a kinde of contentment in this sacred curiosity, returning yet, never the holier, never the happier; how then should I be affected with

with the sight of that place, where he is now in person, sitting gloriously at the right hand of Majesty, adored by all the powers of Heaven : Let it be a covenant between me and my eyes, never to look up at Heaven, (as how can I look beside it ?) but I shall, in the same instant, think of my blessed Saviour, sitting there in his glorified humanity, united to the incomprehensible -- glorious Deity, attended and worshiped by thousand thousands of Saints and Angels, preparing a place for me and all his elect in those eternal Mansions.

LXXVIII.

How lively doth the Spirit
of

Heb. 11. 10.

of God describe the heavenly affections of faithful *Abraham*; that he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God:

What city was this, but the celestial *Jerusalem*, the glorious seat of the Great Empire of Heaven? The main strength of any building is in the foundation; if that be firm and sure, the fabrick well knit together will stand: but if that be either not laid, or lye loose and unsettled, the tottering frame doth but wait upon the next wind for a ruine: The good Patriark had been used to dwell in Tents, which were not capable of a foundation: It is like, he and his ancestors wanted not good houses in *Chaldea*,

Chaldea, where they were formerly planted ; God calls him forth of those fixed habitations in his own Countrey, to sojourn in Tabernacles, or Booths in a strange land ; his faith carries him cheerfully along ; his present fruition gives way to hope of better things ; In stead of those poor sheds of sticks and skins, he looks for a City ; in stead of those stakes and cords, he looks for Foundations ; in stead of mens work, he looks for the Architecture of God. Alas, we men will be building Castles, and Towers here upon earth, or, in the ayr rather ; such as either have no foundation at all ; or at the best, onely a foundation in the dust, neither can they be

Revel. 21.
19.

be any other, whiles they are of mans making; for what can he make in better condition then himself? The City that is of Gods building is deep, and firmly grounded upon the rock of his eternal decree, and hath more foundations then one; and all of them both sure and costly; Gods material house built by *Solomon* had the foundation laid with great squared stone; but *the foundations of the wall of this City of God are garnished with all manner of precious stones: Glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of God: Why do I set up my rest in this house of clay, which is every day falling on my head, whiles I have the assured expectation of so glorious*

rious a dwelling above? For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God; an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.

2 Cor. 4. 1.

LXXIX.

God, though he be free of his entertainments, yet is curious of his guests: we know what the great house-keeper said to the fordid guest; *Friend how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?* To his feast of glory none can come but the pure; without this disposition no man shall so much as see God, much less be entertained by him: To his feast of grace none may come but the clean; and those who

Heb. 12. 14.

Colos. 3. 9,
10.

Haggai. 2.
12, 13.

who upon strict examination have found themselves worthy ; That we may be meet to sit at either of these Tables, there must be a putting off, ere there can be a putting on ; a putting off the old garments, ere there can be a putting on the new ; the old are foul and ragged, the new clean and holy ; for if they should be worn at once ; the foul and beastly under-garment would soyl, and defile the clean ; the clean could not cleanse the foul : As it was in the Jewish law of holiness, holy flesh in the skirt of the garment could not infuse an holiness into the garment ; but the touch of an unclean person might diffuse uncleanness to the garment : Thus our pro-
fessed

fessed holiness, and pretended
 graces are sure to be defiled
 by our secretly-maintained
 corruption, not our corrup-
 tion sanctified by our graces ;
 as in common experience, if
 the sound person come to see
 the infected ; the infected
 may easily taint the sound ;
 the sound cannot by his pre-
 sence heal the infected : If
 ever therefore we look to be
 welcome to the feasts of God,
 we must *put off the old man*
with his deeds, and put on the
new man, which is renewed in
knowledg. after the image of him
that created him.

Colos. 3 9,
10.

L X X X.

It is not for us to cast a dis-
 paragement upon any work
 of our Maker ; much less
 upon

Rom. 13.
14.

Rom. 7. 18.

upon a piece so near, so essential to us: yet with what contempt doth the Apostle seem still to mention our *flesh*? and, as if he would have it fleighted for some forlorn out-cast, he charges us, not to *make provision for the flesh*: What? shall we think the holy man was slain out with a part of himself? Surely, sometimes his language that he gives it, is hard: *The flesh rebels against the spirit: I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: but how easie is it to observe, that the Flesh sometimes goes for the body of man; sometimes for the body of sin: as the first, it is a partner with the soul; as the latter, it is an enemy; and the worst of enemies,*

enemies, spiritual : No marvel then if he would not have provision made for such an enemy : In outward and bodily enmity, the case, and his charge is otherwise : *If thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink : but here, make no provision for the flesh : What reason were there that a man should furnish, and strengthen an enemy against himself ? But if the flesh be the body of the man, it must challenge a respect ; but the very name carries an intimation of baseness ; at the best, it is that which is common to beasts with us ; There is one flesh (saith the Apostle) of men , another flesh of beasts ; both are but flesh : Alas, what is it but a clod of earth better molded,*

Prov. 25.
22.

Rom. 12.
20.

1 Cor. 15.
39.

molded, the clog of the soul, a rotten pile, a pack of dust, a feast of worms : But even as such, provision must be made for it ; with a moderate and thrifty care, not with a solicitous : a provision for the necessities and convenience of life, not for the fulfilling of the lusts : This flesh must be fed, and clad ; not humored, not pampered : so fed as to hold up nature, not inordinateness ; shortly, such an hand must we hold over it, as that we may make it a good servant, not a lawless wanton.

LXX XI.

What action was ever so good, or so compleatly done, as to be well taken of all hands ?

hands: *Noah* and *Lot* fore-
 tel of judgments from God,
 upon the old world, and *So-*
dom, and are scoffed at: *Israel*
 would go to sacrifice to God
 in the wilderness, and they are
 idle; *Moses* and *Aaron* will be
 governing *Israel* according to
 Gods appointment; *Ye take*
too much upon you, ye sons of
Levi: *David* will be dancing
 before the *Ark* of the Lord;
 He uncovers himself shame-
 lessly as one of the vain fel-
 lows: Our Saviour is socia-
 ble; *He is a wine-bibber, a freind*
of publicans and sinners: *John*
Baptist is solitary, and austere;
 He hath a devil: Christ casts
 out devils; He doth it by
Beelzebub the prince of devils:
 He rides in an homely pomp
 through *Jerusalem*; he affects a
 temporal

2 Sam. 6.
 20.
 Matt. 11. 18,
 19.

Act. 2. 13.

Act. 6. 11.

temporal kingdom ; and he is no friend to *Cæsar* that can suffer him to live . He is by his Almighty power risen from the dead ; his Disciple stole him away , whiles the Soldiers slept : The Spirit of God descends upon the Apostles in fiery and cloven tongues , and they , thus inspired , suddenly speak all Languages ; they are full of new wine . *Stephen* preacheth Christ the end of the Law ; He speaks blasphemous words against *Moses* and against God ; and what aspersions were cast upon the primitive Christians , all Histories witness : What can we hope to do , or say , that shall escape the censures , and misinterpretations of men , when

when we see the Son of God could not avoyd it : Let a man profess himself honestly conscionable, he is a scrupulous hypocrite, Let him take but a just liberty in things meerly indifferent, he is loosely profane; Let him be charitably affected to both parts (though in a quarrel not fundamental,) he is an odious neuter, a luke-warm *Laodicean* : It concerns every wise Christian to settle his heart in a resolved confidence of his own holy and just grounds, and then to go on in a constant course of his well-warranted judgment, and practise, with a careless dis-regard of those fools-bolts which will be sure to be shot at him, which way soever he goes.

LXXXII

LXXXII.

2 Tim. 4. 8.

All Gods dear and faithful ones are notably described by the Apostle, to be such as *love the appearing of our Lord Jesus* : for certainly, we cannot be true friends to those whose presence we do not desire and delight in ; now this appearing is either in his coming to us, or our going to him ; whether ever it be, that he makes his glorious return to us for the judgment of the world, and the full redemption of his elect ; or, that he fetches us home to himself, for the fruition of his blessedness ; in both, or either, we enjoy his appearance : If then we can only be content with either of these ;

these ; but do not love them,
nor wish for them ; our hearts
are not yet right with God :
It is true that there is some
terror in the way to both
these ; his return to us is not
without a dreadful Majestic;
for the *Heavens shall pass
away with a great noyse ; and
the elements shall melt with
feruent heat ;* and the glori-
ous retinue of his blessed An-
gels must needs be with an
astonishing magnificence ; and
on the other part our passage
to him must be through the
gates of death , wherein na-
ture cannot but apprehend an
horror ; but the immediate
issue of both these is so in-
finitely advantageous , and
happy, that the fear is easily
swallowed up of the joy ;

2 Pet. 3. 10.

L

Doth

Judg. ii.
34.

Doth the daughter of *Jephthah* abate ought of her umbrells and dances because she is to meet a father, whose armes are bloody with victory? Doth a loving wife entertain her returning husband otherwise then with gladness, because he comes home in a military pomp? Is the conqueror less joyful to take up his crown, because it is congratulated to him with many peals of Ordnance? Certainly then, neither that heavenly state wherein Christ shall return to us; nor the fears of an harmless and beneficial death, wherein we shall pass to him, either may, nor can hinder ought of our love to his appearing: O Saviour, come in whatever equipage, or

or fashion thou wilt, thou
canst be no other then lovely,
and welcome: Come Lord Je-
sus, come quickly.

LXXXIII.

Suppose a man comes to
me on the same errand which
the Prophet delivered to Ho-
zekiah; *Set thine house in order,*
for thou shalt dye, and not live:
with what welcome do I en-
ertain him? Do I, with that
good King, turn my face to
the wall, and weep? or do I
say of the messenger as David
said of Ahimelech; *He is a*
good man, and brings good
tidings? Surely, Nature urges
me to the former, which can-
not but hold Dissolution her
greatest enemy; for what can
she abhor so much as a not-
being?

2 Kin. 10. 1.

2 Sam. 18.
27.

Philip. i. 23.

being? Faith perswades me to the latter; telling me that, *To dye is gain*; Now, whether of these two shall prevail with me? Certainly, as each of them hath a share in me; so shall either of them act its own part in my soul: Nature shall obtain so much of me, as to fetch from me, upon the suddain apprehension of death, some thoughts of fear; Faith shall strait step in, and drive away all those weak fears; and raise up my heart to a cheerful expectation of so gainful, and happy a change: Nature shews me the gastliness of death; Faith shews me the transcendency of Heavenly glory: Nature represents to me a rotten carcase; Faith presents me with a glorious

Shortly
the sight of
our faces and
so then,
at blush could
now bitter is t
can now
one thought
depart and
LXXXI
the carriage
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and us, wh
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ation; L

rious soul ; Shortly, nature startles at the sight of death ; Faith out-faces and overcomes it ; so then , I who at the first blush could say , *O Death how bitter is thy remembrance* ; can now upon my deliberate thoughts, say , *I desire to depart and to be with Christ.*

Ecclus.41.1.

Philip.1.23.

LXXVIII.

In the carriage of our holy profession, God can neither abide us cowardly, nor indiscreet : The same mouth that bad us, when we are persecuted in one city, flee into another, said also ; *he that will save his life, shall loose it* ; we may neither cloak cowardice with a pretended discretion ; nor lose our dis-

L 3

cretion

cretion in a rash courage; He
 that is most skillful and most
 valiant, may in his combat
 traverse his ground for an ad-
 vantage; and the stoutest
 Commander may fall flat to
 avoid a Cannon-shot; True
 Christian wisdom, and not
 carnal fear, is that, wherewith
 we must consult for advice,
 when to stand to it, and when
 to give back. On the one
 side, he dies honorably that
 falls in Gods quarrel; on the
 other, he that flies may fight
 again; Even our blessed lead-
 er that came purposely to give
 his life for the world, yet
 when he found that he was
 laid for in *Judea*, flees into
Galilee. The practise of some
 Primitive Christians, that,
 in an ambition of martyrdom
 went

went to seek out and challenge dangers and death, is more worthy of our wonder, and applause, than our imitation. It shall be my resolution to be wariely thrifty in managing my life, when God offers me no just cause of hazard; and to be willingly profuse of my blood, when it is called for by that Saviour, who was not sparing of shedding his most precious blood for me.

LXXXV.

He had need to be well under-laid, that knows how to entertain the time and himself with his own thoughts: Company, variety of employments, or recreations, may wear out the day with the emptiest hearts; but,

L 4

when

when a man hath no society but of himself, no task to set himself upon, but what arises from his own bosome; surely, if he have not a good stock of former notions, or an inward mint of new, he shall soon run out of all, and (as some forlorn bankrupt) grow weary of himself: Hereupon it is that men of barren, and unexercised hearts can no more live without company, then fish out of the water: And those Heremites, and other Votaries, which professing onely devotion, have no mental abilities to set themselves on work, are faine to tire themselves, and their unwelcome hours, with the perpetual repetitions of the same orisons, which are now
grown

grown to a tedious, and heartless formality : Those contemplative spirits that are furnished with gracious abilities, and got into acquaintance with the God of Heaven, may, and can lead a life (even in the closest restraint, or wildest solitariness,) neerest to Angelical ; but those, which neither can have *Maries* heart, nor will have *Marthaes* hand, must needs be unprofitable to others, and wearisome to themselves.

LXXXVI.

There is nothing more easie then to be a Christian at large; but the beginnings of a strict and serious Christianity are not without much difficulty ; for nature affects a loose kinde

L. 5 of

of liberty, which it cannot indure to have restrained: neither fares it otherwise with it, then with some wilde colt; which at the first taking up, flings and plunges, and will stand on no ground; but after it hath been somewhat disciplin'd at the Post, is grown tractable, and quietly submits either to the saddle, or the collar: The first is the worst; afterwards that which was tolerable, will prove easie, and that which was easie will be found pleasant: For in true practical Christianity, there is a more kindly and better liberty; *Stand fast* (saith the Apostle) *in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free*: Lo here a liberty of Christs making;

Gal. 5. 1.

king, and therefore both just, and excellent: for what other is this liberty then a freedom, as from the tyranny of the law, so from the bondage of sin: *Being then made free from sin* (saith Saint Paul) *ye became the servants of righteousness*: Here are two masters, under one of which every soul must serve; either sin, or righteousness: if we be free from the one, we are bond-men to the other; we say truly, the service of God (that is of righteousness) is perfect freedom; but to be free to sin is a perfect bondage; and to serve sin is no other then a vassallage to the devil: From this bondage Christ onely can free us; *If the Son shall make you free, yee shall.*

Rom. 6. 18.

Joh. 8. 36.

shall be free indeed ; and we are no Christians , unless we be thus freed : and being thus freed , we shall rejoyce in the pleasant fetters of our voluntary and cheereful obedience to righteousness ; neither would we for a world return to those gieves and manacles of sin , which we once held our most dear and comely ornaments : and can truly say , Thou hast set my feet in a large room . I will walk at liberty , for I seek thy precepts .

Psal. 31. 8.

Psal. 119. 45.

LXXXVII.

I cannot but pity and lament the condition of those Christians who for the hope of a little earthly dross do willingly put themselves for a continuance out of the pale of

Thoughts.

Church : Wh
but cast them
of the Almi
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himself to follo
his own walk
them out
and Infidels
say to them
Pastor of Pe
works , and
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have they
rest that he
them there
of that Pr
These r
elves. the
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a own. h
put up
enemies
a constrain

of Gods Church : What do they else, but cast themselves quite out of the Almighty's protection ; who hath not bound himself to follow them out of his own walks ; or to seek them out amongst Turks and Infidels ? well may he say to them (as to the chief Pastor of *Pergamus*) *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satans seat is* ; but have they any reason to expect that he should dwell with them there, under the reign of that Prince of darkness ? These men put upon themselves that hard measure, which the man after Gods own heart complains to be put upon him by his worst enemies : *Wo is me that I am constrained to dwell with Meshech,*

Revel. 2. 13.

Psal 120. 5.

1 Sam. 26.
19.

Meshech, and to have my habitation in the Tents of Kedar : That holy man could in the bitterness of his soul inveigh against his persecutors for no other terms then these men offer to themselves : Cursed be they before the Lord, for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord ; saying, go serve other gods : I speak not of those, who carry God along with them in his ordinance ; all earths are alike to us, where we may freely enjoy his presence : but of those straglers, who care not to live without God, so they may be befriended by Mammon. How ill a match these poor men make for themselves ; I send them to their Saviour to learn ;
What

What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world ; and lose his own soul ; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ? God forbid , I should give their souls for lost , but I must say , they are hazarded ; for herein doubtless , they tempt God , who hath not promised to keep them in any other , then their just wayes ; and they do in a sort tempt and challenge Satan , to draw them on either to a love of error and impiety , or at least to a cooling of their care and love of truth : How unlike are these men to that wise merchant in the Gospel ; He sold all that he had to buy the pearl of great price : they sell the pearl to buy a little worthless merchandize. As the

Matt. 16.
26.

Matt. 13.
45.46.

the greatest part of their traffick stands upon exchange ; so I heartily wish they would make this one exchange more ; of less care of their wealth, for more care of their souls.

LXXXVIII.

Even when *Joseph* was a great lord in *Egypt*, second to none but *Pharaoh*, and had the command of that richest countrey of the world ; yet then his old Father *Jacob* thought his poor parcel of *Shechem* worthy to be bequeathed to him, and embraced of him, as a noble patrimony ; because it was in the promised land, and the legacy of a dying Father : How justly do I admire the faith both
of

of the father and son in this donation ! *Jacob* was now in *Goshen*, *Shechem* was in *Canaan*; neither was the father now in the present possession ; nor were the sons in some ages to enjoy it : It was four hundred and thirty years that *Israel* must be a sojourner in a strange countrey, ere they shall enter into the promised Land ; yet now, as foreseeing the future possession, which his posterity should take of this spot of earth, so long after, *Jacob* gives *Shechem* to *Joseph*, and *Joseph* apprehends it as a rich blessing, as the double portion of the divided primogeniture : Infidelity is purblind, and can see nothing but that which is hard at hand ; Faith is quick-sighted,

Exod, 12.
41.

ed, and discerns the events
 of many centuries of years,
 yea of ages to come ; A-
 braham saw his Saviours
 day, and rejoyced to see it,
 thousand time hundred and
 forty years off; and Adam
 (before him) almost four
 thousand years. As to God
 all things are present, even fu-
 ture, so to those that by a live-
 ly faith partake of him : Why
 do I not by that faith see my
 Saviour returning in his Hea-
 venly magnificence, as truly as
 now I see the Heaven whence
 he shall come ; and my body
 as verily raised from the dust,
 and become glorious, as now
 I see it weak and decrepit, and
 falling into the dust :

LXXIX.

LXXIX.

True knowledg causeth appetite and desire; For the will follows the understanding; whatsoever that apprehends to be good for us, the affective part inclines to it: No man can have any regard to an unknown good: If an hungry man did not know that food would refresh and nourish him, or the thirsty that drink would satisfy him, or the naked that fire would warm him, or the sick that Physick would recover him; none of these would affect these factors: And according to our apprehension of the goodness and use of these helps, so is our appetite towards them: For the object of the will is a known

known good, either true, or apprehension
 appearing so : And if our ex-rod to obey a
 perience can tell us of some-ends of their C
 that can say, with her in the-
 Poet ; I see and approve bet-
 ter things, but follow the-
 worse : It is not for that evil,
 as evil, (much less as worse)
 can fall into the will ; but,
 that their appetite over-car-
 ries them to a misconceit of a
 particular good ; so as, how-
 soever in a generality, they
 do confusedly assent to the
 goodness of some holy act, or
 object, yet upon the present
 occasion, (here and now, as the
 School speaketh) their sensi-
 tive appetite hath prevailed to
 draw them to a perswasion,
 that this pleasure, or that pro-
 fit is worthy to be imbraced :
 Like as our first parents had a
 general

general apprehension that it was good to obey all the commands of their Creator; but when it came to the forbidden fruit; now their eye, and their ear, and their heart tell them, it is good for them, both for pleasure, and for the gain of knowledg, to taste of that forbidden tree: So then, the miscarriage is not in that they affect that which they think not to be good; but in that they think that to be good which is not; for alas, for one true good there are many seeming, which delude the soul with a fair semblance: As a man in a generality esteems silver above brass, but when he meets with a rusty piece of silver, and a cleer piece of brass, he chooses

chooses rather the clear brass and not
 then the silver defaced with being
 rust: Surely, it is our ignor-
 ance that is guilty of our
 cool neglect of our spiritual X C
 good; if we did know how which
 sweet the Lord is, in his sure but is
 promises, in his unfailing, an
 mercies, we could not but evil as
 long after him, and remain ky are
 unsatisfied till we finde him maligne
 ours: would God be pleased minde
 to shine in our hearts by the effort:
 light of the true knowledg of ill f
 himself, we could not have mon of
 cause to complain of want of The
 heat in our affections towards r riche
 his infinite goodness. who b

Did we but know how
 sweet and delectable, Christ,
 the Heavenly Man, is, we
 could not but hunger after
 him; and we could not
 hunger

hunger, and not be satisfied;
and, in being satisfied,
blessed.

X C.

Those which we mis-call
goods, are but in their nature,
indifferent, and are either
good or evil as they are affect-
ed, as they are used: Indeed,
all their malignity, or virtue,
is in the mind, in the hand of
the possessor: Riches ill got
ill kept, ill spent are but the
Mammon of iniquity; but
if well, *The Crown of the wise
is their riches*: How can it
be misapplied to have much, when
he that was the richest man of
the East, was the holiest?
Yea, when God himself is
justly styled the possessor of
Heaven, and Earth: How
can

Pro. 14. 24.

Job. 1. 1, 3.

Luke.6.20.

Luke.6.24.

Mar.10.24.

1 Tim.6.

17.

Prov.30.9.

can it be amiss to have little
 when our Saviour sayes
Blessed are ye poor : And
 from that divine mouth, we
 hear a wo to the rich ; him
 self interprets it of them that
 trust in riches : If our riches
 possess us, in stead of our
 possessing them, we have
 changed our God, and lost
 our selves ; but if we have
 learnt to use our wealth, and
 not enjoy it, we may be no
 less gracious then rich : If a
 rich man have a large and
 humble heart, and a just
 hand, he inherits the blessing
 of the poor : If a poor man
 have a proud heart, and a
 theevish hand, he carryes a-
 way the wo from the rich :
Riches (saith wise Solomon)
make themselves wings , they
 fly

fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven; So as we may use the matter, our souls may fly thitherward with them; If we do good, and be rich in good works; ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for our selves a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternall life. Let me say with Agur, Give me neither poverty, nor riches; but whethersoever God gives, I am both thankful and indifferent, so whiles I am rich in estate, I may be poor in spirit; and whiles I am poor in estate I may be rich in grace.

1 Tim. 6.
18, 16.

Prov. 38.

XCI.

Had I been in the streets of
Jericho, sure, me thinks, I
M should

should have justified with *Zacheus* for the Sycomore, to see Jesus; and should have blessed my eyes for so happy a prospect: and yet, I consider that many a one saw his face on earth, which shall never see his glory in Heaven: and I hear the Apostle say, *Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him so no more.* O for the eyes of a *Stephen*, that saw the Heavens opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God! That prospect did as much transcend this of *Zacheus*, as Heaven is above Earth; celestial glory above humane infirmity: And why should not the eyes of my faith behold the

2 Cor. 5.
16.

Act. 7. 55,
56.

the same object which was
seen by *Stephens* bodily eyes:
I see thee, O Saviour, I see
thee, as certainly, though not
so clearly: Do thou sharpen,
and fortifie these weak eyes of
mine, that in *thy light* I may see
light.

Psal. 36.9.

X.CII.

How gracious a word was
that which God said to *Israel*,
I have called thee by thy name,
and *thou art mine*: He that im-
posed that name upon *Jacob*,
makes familiar use of it to his
posterity: Neither is the case
singular, but universally com-
mon to all his spiritual issue.
There is not one of them,
whom he doth not both call
by his name, and challenge
for his own: *He that tells the*

[Isa. 43.1.

Psa. 147.4.

M 2 number

number of the stars, and calls them all by their names; hath also a name for every of these earthly luminaries; He who brought all other living creatures unto man, to see how he would call them, and would make use of *Adams* appellation; reserved the naming of man to himself; neither is there any one of his innumerable posterity, whom he knows not by name: But it is one thing to take notice of their names; another thing to call them by their names; that denotes his omniscience; this his specialty of favor: none are thus graced but the true Sons of *Israel*. As Gods children do not content themselves with a confused knowledg of a Deity,

Gen. 2. 19,
20.

Deity; but rest not till they have attained a distinct apprehension of their God; as he hath revealed himself to man; so doth God again to them: It is not enough that he knows them in a general view as in the throng, wherein we see many faces, none distinctly; but he singles them out in a familiar kinde of severality both of knowledg and respect: As then he hath names for the several Stars of Heaven, *Cimah, Cefil, Mazzareth, &c.* And for the several Angels, *Gabriel, Raphael, Michael, &c.* and calls them by the proper names which he hath given them; so he doth to every of his faithful ones: Of one he saith, *Thou shalt call his name John*: Of another, *Thou*

Job 9 9.

Job. 38. 31.

Luk. 1. 13.
Joh. 1. 42.

M 3

art

Joh. 1. 42. *art Simon, thou shalt be called*
 Luke 19. *Cephas: To one he says, Za-*
 Acts 10. 3, 4. *chaeus, come down; to another,*
Cornelius, thy prayers, and alms
are come up: In short,
there is no one of his, whom
he doth not both know, and
call by his name. What a
comfort is this to a poor
wretched man to think; Here
I walk obscure and contemp-
tible upon earth, in a condi-
tion mean, and despised of
men; but the great God of
Heaven is pleased to take such
notice of me, as even from
Heaven to call me by my
name; and to single me out
for Grace, and Salvation;
and not onely to mention my
name from above, in the gra-
cious offer of his Ordinances,
 Luk. 10. 20. *but to write it in the Eternal*
 Register

Register of Heaven? What care I to be inglorious, yea causelessly infamous with men, whiles I am thus honored by the King of glory?

X C I I I.

It is the great wisdom and providence of the Almighty, so to order the dispositions and inclinations of men, that they affect divers and different works, and pleasures: Some are for manuary trades, others for intellectual employments: One is for the Land, another for the Sea; one for husbandry, another for merchandize; one is for Architecture, another for Vestimentary services; one is for fishing, another for pasturage; and in the learned trades, one is for the

M 4 mistress

mistress of Sciences, Divinity another for the Law, whether Civil, or Municipal ; a third is for the search of the secrets of Nature, and the skill and practice of Physick ; and each one of these divides it self into many differing varieties ; Neither is it otherwise in matter of pleasures ; one places his delight in following his Hawk and Hound, another in the harmony of Musick ; one makes his Garden his paradise, and enjoys the flourishing of his fair Tulips ; another findes contentment in a choice Library ; one loves his Bowl, or his Bowe, another pleases himself in the patient pastime of his Angle: For surely, if all men affected one and the same

same trade of life, or pleasure of recreation, it were not possible that they could live one by another : Neither could there be any use of commerce, whereby mans life is maintained ; neither could it be avoyded, but that the envy of the inevitable rivalry, would cut each others throat. It is good reason we should make a right use of this gracious and provident dispensation of the Almighty ; and therefore that we should improve our several dispositions and faculties to the advancing of the common stock ; and withal, that we should neither encroach upon each others profession, nor be apt to censure each others recreation.

M. 5. XCIV.

XCIV.

He were very quick-sighted that could perceive the growing of the grass, or the moving of the shadow upon the Dial ; yet, when those are done, every eye doth easily discern them. It is no otherwise in the progress of grace ; which how it increaseth in the soul, and by what degrees, we cannot hope to perceive ; but being grown, we may see it : It is the fault of many Christians, that they depend too much upon sense ; and make that the judge of their spiritual estate ; being too much dejected when they do not sensibly feel the proofs of their proficiency, and the present proceedings of

of their regeneration : why do they not as well question the growth of their stature, because they do not see every day how much they are thriven ? Surely, it must needs be that spiritual things are less perceptible than bodily ; much more therefore must we in these, wait upon time for necessary conviction ; and well may it suffice us, if upon an impartial comparing of the present measure of our knowledge, faith, obedience with the former, we can perceive our selves any whit sensibly advanced.

XCV.

The wise Christian hath learned to value every thing according to its own worth ;
If

If we be too glad of these earthly things, it is the way to be too much afflicted with their losse ; and whiles we have them, to be transported into pride and wantonness ; If we esteeme them too little, it is the way to an unthankful disrespect of the giver. Christianity carries the heart in a just equipoise ; when they come, they are welcom'd without too much joy; and when they go, they part without teares : we may smile at these earthly favors, not laugh out ; we may like them, but we must take heed of being in love with them : For love, of what kinde soever it be, is not without the power of assimilation ; If we love the world, we cannot but

but be worldly-minded: *They that are after the flesh, do minde the things of the flesh; and to be carnally minded is death:* Contrarily if we love God, we are made partakers of the divine nature; and we are such as we affect: If we be Christians in earnest; certainly the inner rooms of our hearts, which are the holy of holies, are reserved for the Almighty; the outer courts may be for the common resort of lawful cares and desires, they may come and go; but our God shall have his fixed habitation here for ever.

Rom. 8. 5.
6.

XCVI.

Nature is sly and cunning;
neither is it possible to take
her without a shift: The light
huswife

Prov. 30.
20.

huswife wipes her mouth, and it was not she : *Rachel* hath stoln her fathers Teraphim, and the custom of women is upon her : *Saul* reserves all the fat cattle of the *Amalekites*; it is for a sacrifice to the Lord thy God : Neither is it so onely in excusing an evil done, but in waving a good to be done : I am not eloquent, saith *Moses*; send by him, by whom thou shouldst send; *Pharaoh* will kill me; there is a lyon in the way, saith the Sluggard : I have marryed a wife, I cannot come, saith the sensual Guest. If I give I shall want; If I make a strict profession, I shall be censured : Whereas true Grace is on the one side down right, and ingenuious in its confessions ;

confessions ; not sparing to take shame to it self, that it may give glory to God ; on the other side, resolutely constant to its holy purposes. *I and my house will serve the Lord : If I perish, I perish : I am ready not to be bound only ; but also to dye at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus :* It is not hard therefore for us to know what mistress we serve : If our care and endeavor be by witty evasions to shuffle off both evil and good, we are the vassals of nature ; but if we shall with an humble penitence acknowledge our evil ; and set our selves with firm resolutions upon the tasks of good, we are under Grace, in a way to glory.

XCVII.

XC VII.

It is good for a man not always to keep his eyes at home, but sometimes to look abroad at his neighbors; and to compare his own condition with the worse estate of others: I know I deserve no more then the meanest, no better then the worst of men; yet how many do I see, and hear to lye groaning upon their sick beds, in great extremity of torment, whereas I walk up and down in a competency of health? How many do I see ready to famish, and forced to either beg, or starve, whereas I eat my own bread? How many lye rotting in Goals and Dungeons, or are driven to wander in unknown;

known desarts, or amongst people whose language they understand not, whereas I enjoy home and liberty? How many are thricking under scourges and racks, whereas I sit at ease? And if I shall cast mine eyes upon my spiritual condition; alas, how many do I see sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death; whereas the Sun of Righteousness hath arisen to me with healing in his wings? How many lye in a woful bondage under sin and Satan, whereas my Saviour hath freed me from those hellish chains, and brought me to the glorious liberty of the sons of God? how many are miserably misled into the dangerous by-paths of error, whereas he
hath

Mal. 4. 2.

hath graciously kept me in a plain and sure way of his saving Truth? If we do not sometimes make these (no proud, but thankful) comparisons, and look upon ourselves, not with direct beams but by reflection upon others, we shall never be sensible enough of our own mercies.

XCVIII.

The true Christian is in a very happy condition, for no man will envy him, and he can envy no body: None will envy him, for the world cannot know how happy he is; How happy in the favor of a God; how happy in the enjoying of that Favor: Those secret delights that he finds in the presence of his God;
those

those comfortable pledges of love, and mutual interchanges of blessed interest which pass between them, are not for worldly hearts to covet; and no man will envy an unknown happiness. On the other side, he cannot envy the worlds greatest favorite under Heaven; for he well knows how fickle and uncertain that mans felicity is; he sees him walking upon Ice, and perceives every foot of his sliding, and threatening a fall; and hears that brittle pavement, at every step, crackling under him, and ready to give way to his swallowing up: and withal, finds, if those pleasures of his could be constant and permanent, how poor and unsatisfying they

they are, and how utterly unable to yield true contentment to the soul. The Christian therefore, whiles others look upon him with pity and scorn, laughs secretly to himself in his bosom, as well knowing there is none but he truly happy.

X C I X.

It was an high and honorable embassie, whereon the Angel *Gabriel* was sent down to the blessed Virgin; that she should be the Mother of her Saviour: Neither was that inferior of the glorious Angel that brought the joyful tidings of the incarnation and birth of the Son of God, to the shepherds of *Bethlehem*; but a far more happy errand

grand was that which the Lord Jesus, after his Resurrection, committed to the *Maries*: *Go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God*: Lo, he says not I am risen, but I ascend; as if he had forgot the Earth, whence he arose; and thought only on that Heaven whither he was going: Upon his *Easter*, his mind is on his *Ascension* day. As there had been nothing but discomfort in death, without a Resurrection; so there had been little comfort in a Resurrection, without an Ascension, to glory. There is contentment in the very act, ascend; even nature is ambitious; and we do all affect to

Joh. 20. 17.

to mount higher; as to come down is a Death; but the height is, like the ascension infinite, *I ascend to my Father*. There was the glory which he put off in his humble Incarnation; there was the glory which he was now to resume, and possess to all eternity:

And, as if Nature and Adoption could give a like interest, he puts both together; *My Father, and your Father; my God, and your God*: His mercy vouchsafes to stile us Brethren; yet the distance is unmeasurable, betwixt him, the Son of his eternal Essence, and us the naturally wretched sons of his gracious Election; yet, as if both he and we should be coheirs of the same blessed-

blessedness (though not in the
 same measure) he says, *My
 Father, and your Father* : First,
my Father, then yours ; and
 indeed therefore ours, because
 his : It is in him that we are
 elected, that we are adopted :
 Without him, God were not
 to us a lonely a stranger, but an ene-
 my ; It is the Son that must
 make us free ; It is the Son
 that must make us sons : If
 we be his, the Father cannot
 but be ours.

O the unspeakable comfort
 and happiness of a Christian ;
 In respect of his bodily na-
 ture, he cannot but say (with
Job) *to the worm, Thou art my
 mother, and my sister* ; in his
 spiritual right, God the Son
 hath here authorized him to
 say *to the Almighty, Thou art
 my*

Job 17.15.

my Father : And if nature shall, in regard of our frail and dying condition, whiningly say, *I descend to the grave*; Faith makes abundant amends in him, and can as cheerfully say, *I ascend to my Father*; And what son (that is not altogether graceless) would not be glad to go to his father, though it were to a meaner house than his own? and therefore is ready to say, *I will descend to my Father*; How much more, when his many Mansions are infinitely glorious; and when all our happiness consists in his blessed Presence, must we needs say, with a joy unspeakable, and glorious, *I ascend to my Father*?

C. God

C.

God made man the lord of his Creatures ; he made him not a Tyrant ; he gave the Creatures to man for his lawful use , not for his wanton cruelty : Man may therefore exercise his just sovereignty over the beasts of the field , and fowls of the air , and fishes of the sea ; not his lawless will to their needless destruction, or torment : Had man made the Creature, he could but challenge an absolute dominion over that work of his hands ; but now that he is onely a fellow creature to the meanest worm , What an insolent usurpation is this , so licentiously to domineer over his fellow dust : Yea,

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that

that great God, who gave a Being to the creature; and therefore hath a full and unlimited power over his own workmanship; takes no pleasure to make use of that power to the unnecessary vexation, and torture of what he hath made: That all-wise and bountiful Creator, who hath put into the hands of man the subordinate Dominion over all the store of these inferior Elements, hath made the limit of his command, not necessity only, but convenience too; but if man shall go beyond these bounds, and will destroy the creature only, because he will, and put it to pain because it is his pleasure; he abuseth his sovereignty to a sinful imperiousness,

ousness, and shall be accountable for his cruelty. When the Apostle, upon occasion of the Law for not muzzling the mouth of the Ox, asks, *Doth God take care for oxen?* Can we think he meant to question the regard that God hath to so useful a Creature? Do we not hear the Psalmist say, *He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens that cry?* Do we not hear our Saviour say, *That not a sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly Father?* And of how much more value is an Ox then many thousands of Sparrows? Is not the speech therefore, both comparative and typical? Is the main care that God takes in that Law, for provision to be made for

1 Cor. 9. 9.

Pf. 147. 9.

Mat. 10. 29.

N 2 the

Pfal 104.
21, 27, 28.

Pro. 12. 10.

the beast ; and doth he not rather under that figure give order for the maintenance of those spiritual Oxen , that labor in the husbandry of the Almighty ? Doubtless , as even the savage creatures, *The young Lyons seek their meat from God* ; so they finde it from him in due season ; *He openeth his hand and filleth every creature with good* : Is God so careful for preserving, and shall man be so licentious in destroying them ? *A righteous man (saith Solomon) regardeth the life of his beast* ; he is no better, therefore, then a wicked man that regardeth it not : To offer violence to, and to take away the life from our fellow-creatures, without a cause , is no less then tyranny :

ny : Surely, no other measure should a man offer to his beast, then that, which if his beast (with *Balaams*) could expostulate with him, he could well justifie to it ; no other, then that man, if he had been made a beast, would have been content should have been offered by man to him ; no other then he shall make account to answer to a common Creator. Justly do we smile at the niceness of the foolish *Manichees*, who made scruple to pull an herb or flower, and were ready to Preface apologies and excuses for the reaping of their Corn, and grinding the grain they fed upon, as if these Vegetables were sensible of pain, and capable of our oppression;

N 3

but

but surely, for those creatures which enjoying a sensitive life, forgo it with no less anguish and reluctance than our selves; and would be as willing to live, without harm, as their owners, they may well challenge both such mercy and justice at our hands, as that in the usage of them we may approve our selves to their Maker: Wherein I blush and grieve to see how far we are exceeded by *Turks* and *Infidels*; whom meer nature hath taught more tenderness to the poor brute creatures, then we have learned from the holier rules of charitable Christianity.

For my part, let me rather affect and applaud the harmless humor of that mis-called Saint,

Saint, who in an indiscreet humility called every Woolf his brother, and every Sheep, yea, every Ant his sister, following himself with every thing that had life in it, as well as himself; then the tyrannical disposition of those men who take pleasure in the abuse, persecution, destruction of their fellow-creatures, upon no other quarrel, than because they live.

N 4 Super-



Supernumeraries.

I.



Here is a satiety in all other (even the best) things that I either have, or doe: I can be easily apt to complain of being wearied, or cloyed with the same objects but in the thoughts of spiritual things, mee thinkes, I can never have enough : For as there is infinite scope and variety of matter, wherein to employ my meditations, so in each one of them, there is such marvellous depth, that I should in vaine hope, after all
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